

# APEC Insights

Published by the National Center for APEC

Volume 2, Issue 1.....April 6, 2009

## Meeting Recaps

- APEC Business Advisory Council (ABAC) - February 10-12 - Wellington, NZ
- First APEC Senior Officials' Meeting - February 13-26 - Singapore

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## ABAC Responds to Threat of Protectionism

The APEC Business Advisory Council met in Wellington, New Zealand for its first meeting of 2009. While members discussed a range of issues facing the business community, the overarching theme was a concern that governments may bend in the face of pressure to implement protectionist policies in response to the global economic crisis. ABAC is responding to this concern by developing a mechanism to monitor and report on the implementation of trade policy measures that do not comply with the commitments made in the November G20 and APEC Lima meetings. Details of how the process will function will be finalized at ABAC's next meeting to be held in Brunei in May.



The volatility of the current economic climate has also prompted ABAC to issue a set of short-term recommendations to Leaders mid-year with the aim of increasing the relevance and currency of the private sector's input to APEC. Further, ABAC sent a letter to the Leaders of the nine APEC economies which partici-

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## House Press Event Launches APEC Caucus

The House APEC Caucus was formally launched with a press event on March 11, 2009 in Washington. Caucus co-chairs U.S. Representatives Joe Crowley (D-NY), Kevin Brady (R-TX), Rick Larsen (D-WA) and Wally Herger (R-CA), each provided remarks on their support for the Caucus and the importance of APEC to the U.S. economic, trade and foreign policy agenda.

The co-chairs were joined on the stage by NCAPEC Chair Karan Bhatia of GE, who expressed support on behalf of the business community for the leadership of the co-chairs in highlighting this forum to their fellow House members. The event also included remarks from Singapore Ambassador Chan, whose country will host APEC in November of this year. The speakers then took questions from the audience, which included members of the press, the Administration, Congressional staff, and the business community.

In a press release from the co-chairs the mission of the Caucus was described as "to work with APEC officials and interested stakeholders on issues affecting U.S. interests in the Asia-Pacific

region, including trade, energy, finance and investment, climate change, agriculture, intellectual property rights, food safety, and corporate social responsibility."

In his remarks, Representative Larsen indicated that once established, the Caucus plans to meet regularly with policymakers, political leaders, academics, and business leaders to discuss the goals and priorities of APEC. "We plan to help drive active U.S. participation in APEC and development of a robust agenda for 2011," he said.

*Photos: (above) NCAPEC Chairman Karan Bhatia thanks the co-chairs of the House APEC Caucus. (left) ABAC members gather in Wellington, NZ for the first meeting of 2009.*



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## NCAPEC Leadership Corner

One of the biggest challenges facing organizations like the National Center for APEC during tough economic times is retaining current members and attracting new companies to join. Both are important, but perhaps the more critical vital sign for the organization is the ability to draw new companies into membership. The National Center is fortunate to have three new companies join for 2009, and we are delighted to welcome Abbott, ExxonMobil and Wal-Mart Stores to the National Center for APEC's Board. I asked our Wal-Mart Board Member Rob Leggat why APEC is important to Wal-Mart, and why joining the National Center at this time was a priority for Wal-Mart:

*"APEC is unique in the role, the voice, the*



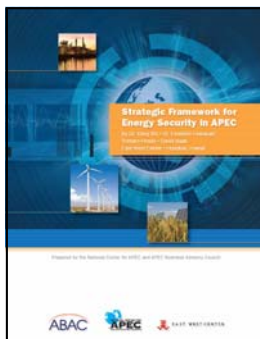
*influence it provides business. For Wal-Mart, with only a couple of exceptions, nearly every country in which we do business is an APEC member. The National Center has a great reputation for ensuring its members are well represented, have the access, the policy intelligence and the opportunity they need to proactively shape the business environment in which they operate."*

*Rob Leggat, Vice President, International Corporate Affairs*

### Private Sector Organizes to Promote APEC Energy Security

Last year the National Center coordinated with the East-West Center and the ABAC to produce the *Strategic Framework on Energy Security in APEC*, a document that lays out a long-range vision for prioritizing energy security policy work in APEC over the coming years. This document was widely distributed at the first Senior Officials' Meeting in Singapore in February. U.S. Ambassador Pat Haslach commended the private sector for this important contribution to the discussion on energy security in APEC, and strongly encouraged her fellow Senior Officials from APEC's other 20 economies to read the report. We anticipate discussion of the report will be a key agenda item in the meeting of APEC's Energy Working Group next month in Chile.

Following publication of the report, the National Center in conjunction with member companies has developed a plan to guide implementation of the *Framework* recommendations over



the coming years. The "Long Range Plan for Enhancing Energy Security in APEC" prioritizes the recommendations of the *Framework* and lays out a series of workshops, events and publications to take place over the next 4 years. The events are coordinated with the meeting cycles of the APEC Energy Ministers and APEC Leaders, and are organized to take advantage of the unique energy-related strengths of the next 5 APEC host economies – Singapore, Japan, the U.S., Russia and Indonesia.

This multi-year effort will be guided by an organization of interested companies called the Energy Policy Support Group, which provides direct guidance to the development of events and agendas, as well as to the establishment of annual and long-range goals and objectives for the Plan. Member companies will also engage directly in the Plan's events through speaking opportunities, hosting of events, and sponsorships of publications. Links to provide additional information on the *Framework*, the "Long-Range Plan", and the EPSG are available from the National Center's website.

For further information, or if your company is interested in being a part of this effort, please contact Rob Modarelli.

### ABAC Issues (continued)

pate in the G20 process urging them to standby their November 2008 pledge to refrain from implementing protectionist measures for 12 months and take other measures to restore confidence in the global trading system. The letter is available at the National Center's website.

In addition to discussing issues for immediate action, ABAC also solidified its work plan for 2009 at the Wellington meeting. ABAC USA successfully tabled all the initiatives raised by the US business community at the Executive Roundtable in San Diego for inclusion in the 2009 work plan. Related recommendations, initiatives and programs will be developed at the year progresses.

#### ABAC II Look-Ahead

The Letter to APEC Ministers' Responsible for Trade and a set of short-term recommendations to Leaders will be the key ABAC deliverables from the second meeting of the year. Additionally, ABAC USA will be tabling proposals on a number of issues and programs including, trade financing, implementation of the Digital Prosperity Checklist, protection of intellectual property rights, Life Sciences Innovation Forum, a customs/trade facilitation work plan, investment facilitation, competition policy and a one-day seminar on corporate governance.

In addition to the issues above, NCAPEC is coordinating the participation of two guest speakers in Brunei. Kang Wu, one of the authors of an NCAPEC and ABAC funded study on energy policy in the Asia Pacific, will be presenting the findings from the study in Brunei (*see related article left*) and John Lamb from the World Bank will attend the Brunei meeting to participate in ABAC's discussions on food security and the APEC Food System.

Documents available online at  
[www.ncapec.org](http://www.ncapec.org)

- ABAC Letter to APEC G20 Leaders
- Detailed coverage of APEC Hill activities
- Strategic Framework for Energy Security in APEC
- House APEC Caucus Press Release



## Senior Officials Advance 2009 Agenda

The first Senior Officials Meeting of 2009 (SOM I) was held in Singapore February 15-16. Much time was devoted to discussion of the stimulus packages introduced by APEC member economies in response to the global economic crisis. Agreement was reached that APEC economies should undertake pro-active measures to mitigate the length and severity of the crisis. In general, there was agreement that APEC's agenda, focused on structural reform, accelerating regional integration and strengthening APEC institutions, was well suited to supporting an effective response.

The Officials agreed to work with ABAC to compile a report on trade-related measures taken by APEC economies that may support or detract from the G20 'standstill commitment' made by APEC Leaders in Lima.

This meeting also marked the beginning of closer collaboration between the SOM and the Senior Finance Officials, who discussed the possibility of a Joint Trade and Finance Ministers Dialogue on Addressing the Economic Crisis during the Leaders' Week in November.



*U.S. Senior Official Ambassador Pat Haslach and Assistant USTR Wendy Cutler representing the U.S.*

Senior Officials also discussed a wide range of issues including trade financing, trade and investment liberalization, improving the business environment, and enhancing physical connectivity. As always, the SOM I was accompanied by meetings of the multitudinous subfora which support the APEC agenda. Detailed information on specific topics and initiatives addressed in the SOM or its subfora are available from the National Center.

## 2009 Calendar of Upcoming Events

<b>April 13 - 18</b>	<b>TELWG Meeting</b>	<b>Singapore</b>
<b>April 27-29</b>	<b>Transportation Ministers</b>	<b>Manila</b>
<b>May 13-15</b>	<b>ABAC II</b>	<b>Brunei</b>
<b>July 15-19</b>	<b>Senior Officials' Meeting</b>	<b>Singapore</b>
<b>July 21-22</b>	<b>Trade Ministers' Meeting</b>	<b>Singapore</b>
<b>August 25-27</b>	<b>ABAC III</b>	<b>Vietnam</b>
<b>September 3-4</b>	<b>NCAPEC Board Retreat</b>	<b>Seattle</b>
<b>October 8</b>	<b>CEO Roundtable</b>	<b>D.C.</b>
<b>October 29-30</b>	<b>Finance Ministers' Meeting</b>	<b>Singapore</b>
<b>November 9-12</b>	<b>ABAC IV</b>	<b>Singapore</b>
<b>November 12</b>	<b>NCAPEC Annual Luncheon</b>	<b>Singapore</b>
<b>November 11-12</b>	<b>Joint Ministerial Meeting</b>	<b>Singapore</b>
<b>November 12- 14</b>	<b>APEC CEO Summit</b>	<b>Singapore</b>
<b>November 14-15</b>	<b>APEC Leaders' Meeting</b>	<b>Singapore</b>

### APEC Summit Week Preview

During the seven days from November 9-15 Singapore will host a series of five APEC meetings, including the final ABAC meeting, 2009 APEC CEO Summit and APEC Leaders' Meeting. The city is well equipped to host the more than 10,000 business people, government officials and media that are expected to visit during the week.

The main draw for business participants will be the 2009 APEC CEO Summit which will be held from November 12-14. Organizers of the Summit, including Singapore ABAC Member Chong Siak Ching, travelled to New York and Washington D.C. in early March to exchange ideas on the formation of the agenda with members of the U.S. business community. Due to the current global economic situation, the organizers have indicated they will hold off on setting specific agenda topics until the dates for the event draw near. It is certain, however, that the global economic crisis will set the framework for all of the discussions. As in years past, organizers will be inviting key APEC Leaders to speak at the Summit, including Chinese President Hu Jintao, who has spoken at every APEC CEO Sum-

mit since taking office, and President Barack Obama, who will be on his first trip to APEC.

Singapore's Suntec Convention Center which is located near a number of large four and five star hotels will serve as the venue for the Summit. Organizers expect between 800 -1,000 participants to attend the event.

NCAPEC will be involved in organizing other events during the week, including US APEC Business Coalition



*The Suntec Convention Center in Singapore will serve as the venue for the 2009 APEC CEO Summit*

side meetings with APEC Leaders, its Annual Luncheon and a workshop on energy efficiency. Please contact the National Center for further information.