



**Asia-Pacific
Economic Cooperation**

2016/SMEWG42/020

Agenda: 17.2

**APEC Public - Private Dialogue on Identifying and
Addressing Difficulties and Challenges That Hinder
SMEs from Taking Trade Benefits and Advantages of
RTAs/FTAs in the Region (SME 06 2015T)**

Purpose: Information
Submitted by: Viet Nam



**42nd Small and Medium Enterprises Working Group
Meeting
Ho Chi Minh City, Viet Nam
27–28 April, 2016**

**APEC Public – Private Dialogue on
Identifying and Addressing Difficulties and
Challenges that Hinder SMEs from Taking
Trade Benefit and Advantages of RTA/FTA
in the Region**

(Hanoi, Vietnam 07-08 January 2016)

- Speakers and participants came from seven APEC member economies (Japan, Mexico, Malaysia, Peru, the Philippines, Thailand and Viet Nam).
- Most of the Workshop participants: from the public sector, academic institutions and the private sector relating to FTA/RTA.

- **Purposes:**

- + increase the awareness of both public and private sectors about the great trade and investment benefits of the implementation of signed RTAs/FTAs to SMEs.
- + Develop a set of policy recommendations to address potential difficulties and challenges that hinder SMEs from taking advantage of trade and investment benefits of signed RTAs/FTAs.
- + sharing best practices and experiences of how to utilize trade and investment opportunities from RTAs/FTA

- **This project:**

- + is in line with the APEC 2015 theme of Inclusive Growth;
- + is designed to implement APEC Leaders and Ministers' instructions in 2011, 2012 and 2013 as well as the Boracay Action Agenda to Globalize MSMEs of MRT 21;
- + greatly contributes to one of the main objectives of the 2013-2016 SMEWG Strategic Plan

- **Outcomes:**

The Dialogue included two days for presentations and discussions:

- +on the current state-of-play and trends of RTAs/FTAs utilization of SMEs in the region
- +prospects and challenges for SMEs to minimize the costs of RTAs/FTAs while maximizing their benefits,
- +impediments to increase RTAs/FTAs utilization by SMEs and policies to promote RTAs/FTAs utilization by SMEs

Key recommendations:

- Government agencies need to act as facilitator;
- Needs to look into new things as new SMEs emerging such as online business, social enterprises, services industry and tourism;
- Seminar on global enterprises for SMEs;
- Develop strategies to promote innovation and technology transfer to improve the competitiveness of SMEs;
- Best practices on innovation and entrepreneurship;
- The Internet: important infrastructure to help SMEs do business and export. On this point, it is shared that APEC may develop a work plan to enabling the participation of SMEs in digital trade;
- Impacts of FTAs/RTAs on agriculture.

