

## CLIENT ALERT

### APEC Leaders Meeting Concludes: APEC Emerges as Leading Asia-Pacific Trade Liberalizing Platform

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Yesterday, President Trump concluded the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Leaders Meeting in Da Nang, Viet Nam – his penultimate stop on the longest Asia tour for a U.S. President in decades. With the United States no longer a part of the Trans-Pacific Partnership or a member of the 16-nation Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) – and with other multilateral groupings reducing or limiting interaction with the private sector – APEC has emerged as the leading Asia-Pacific trade liberalizing platform for businesses to engage with 21 governments that collectively comprise 3 billion consumers and close to 60 percent of global GDP.

Indeed, APEC has established a series of public-private mechanisms to address critical business challenges including:

- **Reducing barriers to digital trade:** APEC economies developed a framework for facilitating cross-border e-commerce and increased participation in the *APEC Cross-Border Privacy Rules (CBPR)* system increasing consumer trust and privacy protections and facilitating digital trade.
- **Removing regulatory barriers to biopharmaceutical exports:** APEC is driving regulatory convergence to international standards and guidelines, including through training delivered by a network of APEC Regulatory Science Centers of Excellence (CoE) launched this year.
- **Eliminating non-tariff barriers:** APEC's public-private initiative on food safety is streamlining non-tariff barriers in the food and agriculture sector such as unnecessary and non-science based export certificates.
- **Leveling the playing field for medical technology and biopharmaceutical exporters:** APEC's ethical business practices initiative is developing the world's first guidance to eliminate unethical practices for third party intermediaries, such as distributors, and has expanded high-standard ethical principles across the Asia Pacific to more than 19,000 enterprises.
- **Expanding trade in chemicals and chemical products:** APEC is engaging governments and industry to align customs procedures with regards to environmental certifications and develop alternative solutions to product bans and taxes.

[The APEC Ministerial statement may be found here.](#)

[The APEC Leaders statement may be found here.](#)

Planning is already underway for the 2018 APEC host year with the Informal Senior Officials Meeting to take place December 5 - 6. Companies that engage have the ability to work alongside governments to help shape the policy and regulatory environment for Asia-Pacific. The alternative is to sit on the sidelines as other governments bend the curve of commercial engagement in their favor.

C&M International, led by former Deputy USTR Ambassador Robert Holleyman, is recognized as a leader in facilitating private sector engagement in APEC and helping companies develop strategic partnerships and initiatives to address challenges and support business goals.

For more information, please contact the professional(s) listed below, or your regular Crowell & Moring contact.

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