APEC Ministers Endorse Energy Security Initiative

Meetings of both APEC Leaders and Ministers, held in Shanghai, China, in October 2001, have endorsed the APEC Energy Working Group's strategic approach to implementing the APEC Energy Security Initiative.

Energy security is very important to the APEC region's economic, social and environmental goals. The Energy Security Initiative includes measures to respond to temporary supply disruptions. It also details longer-term policy responses that address the broader challenges facing the region's energy supply that are practical in a policy context, and acceptable in a political context.

The Leaders' Statement on Counter-terrorism, released on 21 October, stated that a critical measure for enhancing counter-terrorism cooperation would be "Strengthening energy security in the region through the mechanism of the APEC Energy Security Initiative which examines measures to respond to temporary supply disruptions and longer term challenges facing the region's energy supply."

Leaders also highlighted energy as an area where APEC activities could contribute to strengthening of sector protection.

APEC Economic Ministers called on the Energy Working Group to intensify its work on strengthening the security and reliability of affordable energy to all in APEC, through such means as:

- an exchange of information and experience on oil stockpiling, on facilitating energy efficiency and conservation, and on facilitating improved stability in the provision of energy supply to meet demand.
- further energy technology development, exchange, application and deployment, and
- facilitation of a diverse and efficient supply mix to avoid the risks posed to the economy by volatility in the international oil market.

The Energy Security Initiative had been discussed in Energy Security Workshops held in Bangkok and Port Moresby in September 2001 prior to its endorsement at the 22nd meeting of the EWG held 27-28 September. It was then forwarded to APEC Leaders and Ministers for consideration and endorsement at their October meeting.

The Initiative proposes a series of specific collaborative projects. These projects will involve the expert groups and will be managed by EWG members.

The following actions are planned in the forthcoming months:

- The Asia Pacific Energy Research Centre (APERC) will evaluate the oil data initiative in cooperation with several international organizations (IEA, OPEC etc) after their meeting scheduled in Riyadh to review the six month trial data collection exercise;
- A workshop on sharing information on oil data initiative and stocks is proposed to be held prior to, or in conjunction with EWG23, scheduled for May 2002;
• As a first step towards materialising real-time international information sharing in an oil supply emergency situation, the EWG will work to establish a network among APEC members, who wish to participate;
• To deal with the possibility of sea lane disruption, a workshop will be held in Tokyo in the second quarter of 2002, as part of APERC activities; and
• The EWG Secretariat is working with EWG members to decide how the EWG will address the longer term approach. In addition, the EWG Expert Groups will be considering any initiatives within their activities which could be used to enhance energy security.

A greater involvement of the business community will be sought in pursuit of the overall energy security initiative.

APEC EWG Secretariat
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