

**Statement by Dr Lawrence Loh, Secretary General, Association of Pacific Rim Universities delivered at the 26<sup>th</sup> APEC Human Resources Development Working Group Meeting, Jeju Island, Republic of Korea, May 14, 2004**

Mr. Chairman  
Distinguished Delegates  
Ladies and Gentleman

It gives me great pleasure, as Secretary General of the Association of Pacific Rim Universities, to participate in this 26<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the HRDWG.

We are grateful to the members of the HRDWG and the APEC Secretariat in according us the privilege to attend this meeting. Let me also thank the host, the government of the Republic of Korea, for the superb arrangements and gracious hospitality.

Over the past few days, I have had the opportunity to witness the various plenary and network meetings and have gained a deeper insight and appreciation of the work that APEC is doing in human resources development.

I hope to share in my short remarks this afternoon how APRU may contribute to realizing some of these goals. Let me begin by giving you some information about our association, or APRU, as it is known.

APRU is a consortium of 36 leading research universities from 16 economies in the Pacific Rim. APRU was founded in 1997 to help its members be effective contributors to the development of an increasingly integrated Pacific Rim community. APRU seeks to promote scientific, educational and cultural collaboration among the Pacific Rim economies. APRU's membership represents the region's rich diversity and aims to deepen intellectual and cross-cultural exchanges among members. The National University of Singapore, of which APRU Chairman, Professor Shih Choon Fong is the president, provides the APRU Secretariat.

Many of the issues discussed on human capital in the region are of relevance and importance to APRU universities. These issues include addressing the human capital needs for the APEC region for skilled labor for the year 2010; the training of professionals in the various strategic fields in engineering, science, medicine and computer engineering; the use of information technology and Internet connections in distance learning; the mobility of people across the region for teaching, research and scholarship.

Increasingly, developing human capital is recognized as being important in the new knowledge-based economy. In the global economy, skilled workers will need life-long education and training to keep pace with scientific and technological changes.

APRU believes that education, research and innovation serve as key engines for economic growth and social development for APEC economies. In the new economy, universities are powerful engines for economic progress and in developing both human and material capacity. As research universities in their respective

regions, APRU universities perform an important role in nurturing the knowledge workers who will become the future scientists, engineers and entrepreneurs.

As a network, APRU has developed international programs and broad-based research that fosters knowledge creation and exchange of ideas across member universities in the Pacific Rim. Leveraging on the synergies of its members, APRU has promoted self-sustaining strategically focused programs that facilitate the cross-fertilization of academia and enterprise. APRU also brings together the combined expertise of member universities to develop teaching and research applications that utilize advanced Internet technologies.

You may find more information on APRU in the fact sheet circulated. In the spirit of the Internet age, you may also visit [www.apru.org](http://www.apru.org).

APRU would be pleased to help APEC accomplish its goals. APRU offers an available resource for the APEC community in supporting its human resources development and science and technology initiatives. We look forward to the opportunity to working with APEC in providing value-added resources for expanding educational, economic and technological cooperation among APEC economies.

Thank you for your kind attention.