

**Address by Professor Choon Fong SHIH
Chairman, Association of Pacific Rim Universities (APRU) and
President, National University of Singapore (NUS)
6th Annual Leaders' Meeting of APRU
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University of California, Berkeley**

Presidents, Friends and Colleagues

I would like to thank the University of California, Berkeley for hosting the 6th Annual Leaders' Meeting of the Association of Pacific Rim Universities (APRU). This has been a fruitful and delightful meeting. We have had a wonderful time and it has been a great pleasure to be here at Berkeley. Please join me in thanking our host for your efforts and arrangements as well as your warm hospitality.

From a gem of an idea, APRU has grown into a healthy alliance of 34 research universities along the Pacific Rim. APRU's programs and activities include APRUNet, Fellows Programs, doctoral student conferences, research symposiums and strategic collaborations with non-profit consortia. Alternating between both shores of the Pacific Rim, APRU's Annual Leaders' Meeting has broad participation and is becoming a tradition. Through all these, APRU enjoys an increasing reputation in the Pacific Rim and beyond.

I am deeply honored to be elected chairman and will do my utmost to fulfill my role. I look forward to work with you, build on our momentum, and move APRU forward.

With the strong foundation laid by Steve Sample, we are in an enviable position to advance APRU's objectives and aspirations. I like to take this opportunity to express our deep appreciation to President Steven B. Sample for bringing APRU to where it is today. Please join me in thanking Steve for his devotion and his farsighted leadership.

Our dedicated colleagues in APRU's steering committee are: Gavin Brown, Tadimitsu Kishimoto, Lee Ki-Jun, Luis Riveros, Wang Dazhong, and Henry Yang. Let us recognize and thank them.

We know that vision and ideas alone do not build or sustain a consortium of universities. As they say, the devil is in the details. The challenge in carrying out APRU's agenda and coordinating APRU's programs and initiatives was placed on the shoulders of Dr Richard Drobnick – our able Secretary-General. Please join me in expressing our gratitude to Dick Drobnick.

But we are not going to let Steve and Dick off the hook so easily. The steering committee has invited Steve Sample to be Chairman Emeritus and Dick Drobnick to be Secretary-General Emeritus. Both agreed to be hooked.

I am pleased that Dr Lawrence Loh, Associate President of NUS, has agreed to shoulder the challenging responsibility as Secretary-General of APRU. Lawrence Loh will oversee the APRU Secretariat in Singapore, coordinate APRU's activities and help advance APRU's trans-Pacific agenda.

As you had given your support to Steve and Dick, Lawrence and I are counting on your support to face the challenges and accomplish the tasks ahead. We can all, I believe, count on the continuing support and advice of Steve and Dick.

I think we can agree that APRU is a consortium of research universities distinguished by our pursuit of excellence in education and research, with a strong sense of civic and social responsibility. Moreover, some of us are state or national universities with mandates to contribute to social and economic development.

To grow and flourish, APRU needs all our support. In its first five years, the University of Southern California contributed significant funds and resources to APRU and its Secretariat. For a knowledge organization, the most important resource is talent. In this, USC has generously contributed to APRU the services of its founding chairman and founding Secretary-General.

To further its growth in the 21st century, APRU needs our continued support. As a national university of a Pacific Rim economy, the National University of Singapore (NUS) is committed to APRU. NUS will put in the funds and resources to run APRU's Secretariat and drive its agenda and initiatives. Also, NUS will offer the services of its second Chairman, as well as its second Secretary-General.

Today, the Pacific Rim encompasses some of the world's most vibrant economies. These include advanced post-industrial economies, as well as rapidly industrializing economies.

Many Pacific Rim economies are forging ahead – enhancing their competitiveness and moving towards greater integration. This trend is evident in the establishment of Free Trade Agreements along the Pacific Rim, China’s entry into the WTO, and the creation of APEC.

I like to give a direct quote from APEC’s website: www.apecsec.org.sg
“Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) was established in 1989 in response to the growing interdependence among Asia-Pacific economies. Begun as an informal dialogue group, APEC has since become the primary regional vehicle for promoting open trade and practical economic cooperation. Its goal is to advance Asia-Pacific economic dynamism and sense of community.”

An important parallel objective of APRU is to support the efforts of APEC. And our consortium has received several APEC endorsements.

For decades, the Pacific Rim has experienced an imbalance in talent flow. Many were attracted to the major American research universities and the distinctive entrepreneurial culture of high tech hubs, as in Silicon Valley. In recent years, we are seeing the beginning of a better balanced talent flow between North America and Asia , spawning mini-Silicon Valleys in Asia. We are witnessing the intensifying of win-win trans-Pacific ties and linkages.

In tandem, many Pacific Rim economies are investing in their up and coming research universities. These universities are starting to take on roles as wellsprings of ideas and talents as well as engines of innovation and economic growth. These trends parallel the patterns of knowledge and technology activities found in established research universities and

the high tech hubs around them. Not surprisingly, some have forecasted that the 21st century will be the Pacific Rim century.

APRU can leverage on the strengths of member universities and exploit the positive network effects associated with the processes of discovery and creation of knowledge, thereby serving as a channel for the efficient transfer of cutting edge technologies. Over the past years, APRU has coordinated the study of how member institutions transfer and apply new knowledge generated by research. This culminated in the “Technology Transfer and Wealth Creation Conference” (T2WC) held in May 2002, which has sprung a platform for researchers, inventors, venture capitalists and government agencies to network and exchange ideas.

I believe that the time is right for APRU to take on a catalytic role in advancing knowledge, transferring technologies, and creating wealth for the Pacific Rim. To this end, I propose APRU Enterprise as a strategic initiative to leverage on the diverse and distinctive strengths of member universities in education, research, and technology transfer and application. APRU Enterprise can serve as an expressway for knowledge and technology transfer among member institutions.

In the coming years, I will be working with you to identify and develop new programs and initiatives. These could include platforms to disseminate best entrepreneurial practices, as well as launching innovations and commercializing technologies. In these ways, APRU can serve as a vehicle to channel our support for APEC to advance “*Asia-Pacific economic dynamism and sense of community*”.

In the past two years, I have enjoyed working with you as member of the steering committee. As I take on additional responsibilities, I look to your continued support. I believe that we are witnessing the growth of APRU into a vibrant trans-Pacific alliance of research universities. Let us work together, face challenges, and seize opportunities at the dawn of the Pacific Rim century.

Thank you.