

UNITED NATIONS ESCAP



Asia-Pacific Business Forum

*"A key actor in Asia-Pacific sustainable development"*

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OVERVIEW

# Asia-Pacific Business Forum (APBF) since 2004

An initiative of  
United Nations Economic and Social Commission  
for Asia and The Pacific (ESCAP)



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<http://APBF.UNESCAP.ORG>

## Overview

The Asia-Pacific Business Forum (APBF) is the first and only regional multi-stakeholder business forum organized by the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP). With its 62 members, ranging from least developed and Pacific Island countries, to countries with emerging markets, the ESCAP secretariat and ESCAP's Business Advisory Council are the driving forces behind APBF.

APBF was first launched in 2004 in Shanghai, where it attracted over 2,000 participants from business, government, academia and civil society from across the region. Over the course of one decade, APBF has evolved as a meaningful regional multi-stakeholder network, and has been hosted in various locations, such as Almaty, Bangkok, Jakarta, Kuala Lumpur and Kunming. Its mission has always been to provide the best platform for regional public-private sector dialogue on the roles and needs of business in achieving inclusive, resilient and sustainable development. This year, APBF 2013 will hold its ten-year anniversary session in Bangkok, Thailand in order to better engage Pacific businesses and stakeholders in this year's Forum, which falls under the theme:

Connecting  
the Pacific  
with Asia

## APBF Objectives

**Overall Objective:** To identify the challenges and opportunities for connecting businesses in the Asia-Pacific region, within the context of achieving inclusive and sustainable development in the region in general and the Pacific subregion in particular.

### Key Session Objectives:

- To identify ways in which the Pacific's private sector can be strengthened in key strategic areas such as food, agriculture and fisheries, and how the Pacific can strengthen its services sector in industries such as tourism.
- To identify the current challenges facing regional connectivity, determine avenues to strengthen connectivity, and promote inclusive and sustainable growth of the private sector in Asia and the Pacific, with a focus on small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).
- To identify how a stronger regional business community can emerge to meet the collective challenges of increased competition, the need for corporate sustainability, the complexities of the regulatory environment, as well as identify the business community's role and ability to address climate change adaptation and mitigation issues, which are having disproportionate effects on particular countries/regions (including Pacific Islands).
- To discuss the relevant international tools, instruments and facilities aimed at increasing the efficiency of regional and global cross-border trade.
- To assess the current state of SME financing in the region and to identify the challenges and opportunities to enhance financing for SMEs in Asia and the Pacific generally and the Pacific subregion in particular.

## Participants

APBF has attracted and benefited from outstanding business leaders such as Mr. Narayana Murthy, Founder and Chairman Emeritus of Infosys and Dr. Victor Fung, Chairman of the Li & Fung Group as well as political leaders such as the former Prime Minister of Malaysia, Dr. Mahathir Mohammed, the former President of Indonesia, Dr. Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono and Dr. Karim Massimov, the former Prime Minister of Kazakhstan. These high-level speakers and many others have made APBF a truly significant event, facilitating multi-stakeholder dialogues on key issues of relevance to businesses in the region such as:

- **Improving a pro-business environment;**
- **Global value chains;**
- **South-South investment;**
- **Corporate sustainability;**
- **Trade facilitation;**
- **Energy security;**
- **Climate change.**

## Highlight

A concrete highlight of APBF is the establishment of the ESCAP Business Advisory Council (EBAC), which not only provides substantive support and in-kind contributions to APBF, but also serves as a private sector advisory group to ESCAP's programmes of work in general and the organization of APBF in particular.

Members of EBAC consist of business leaders, CEOs, representatives and experts from or operating in regional member and associate member countries of ESCAP. National chambers of commerce and industry or federations of industry of regional member and associate member countries of ESCAP are particularly encouraged to be represented on EBAC at the senior level. Currently there are approximately 50 active EBAC members. Members conform to and promote ethical and responsible business practices and fully subscribe to United Nations principles and norms. They strive towards full implementation of the principles of the UN Global Compact, and towards Global Compact membership. Global Compact is a strategic business policy initiative, which promotes organizations adherence to human rights, labour, environment and anti-corruption standards. Overall, EBAC members' reputation rests partly on the association with the United Nations.

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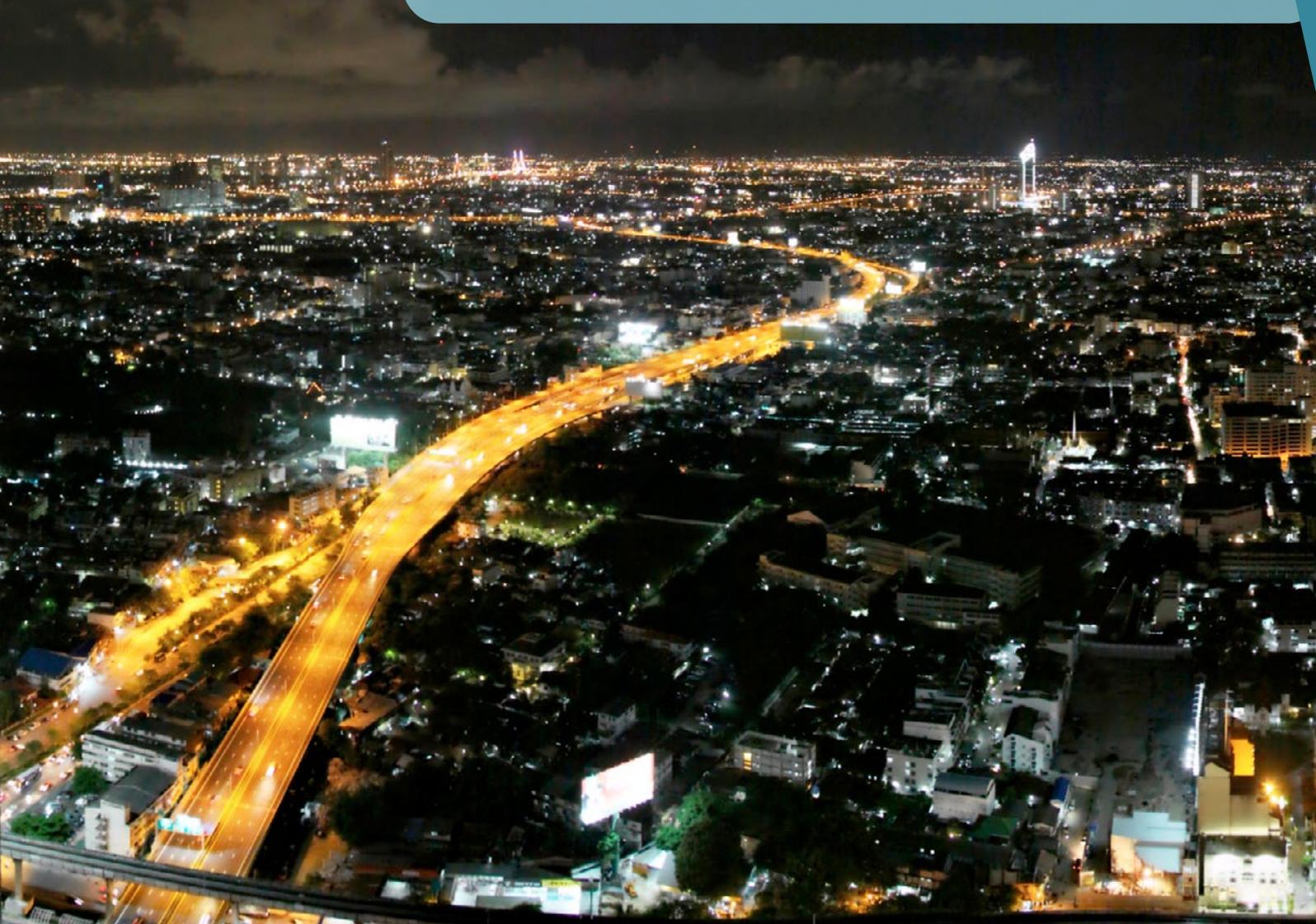


Asia-Pacific Business Forum

ORGANIZED

IN COOPERATION BETWEEN

United Nations ESCAP and the ESCAP Business Advisory Council (EBAC)



United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and Pacific (UN ESCAP)

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