



NACC's Press Release

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NACC Underlined Anti-Corruption Priorities through APEC Meetings & Project on Digital Technologies

Bangkok/Nonthaburi - As Thailand assumed APEC's Chairmanship from New Zealand through the year 2022, the National Anti-Corruption Commission (NACC) took this opportunity to provide leadership to APEC's anti-corruption agenda and build a momentum in the fight against corruption. In February 2022, the NACC hosted plenary meetings of **APEC Anti-Corruption and Transparency Experts' Working Group (ACTWG) and Anti-Corruption Authorities and Law Enforcement Agencies Network (ACT-NET)**, and a virtual workshop on digital technologies and anti-corruption.

On 14-15 February 2022, the NACC launched the two-day Workshop on Technology for Transparency: Digital Disruption to Corruption via Zoom Meeting for anti-corruption and law enforcement practitioners of APEC member economies, with the hosting venue at the Office of the NACC. This workshop is an APEC-funded project proposed by the NACC under the ACTWG forum as one of the initiatives and key deliverables of the Host Economy in 2022.

It was co-sponsored by 10 other APEC economies. This project aimed to address the current challenges faced by APEC economies in the age of digital transformation by building and enhancing capacity of anti-corruption and law enforcement officials of APEC economies on the use of digital technologies to tackle corruption and promote transparency.

The event showcased speakers from remarkable international organisations, state agencies and the private sector: the UNODC, the UNDP, Asian Development Bank, the Securities and Exchange Commission, the National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission and Ascend Money as well as a pre-recorded statement from the International Anti-Corruption Academy. Topics of extensive discussion included the use and misuse of digital technologies to facilitate corruption, and the challenges of virtual assets to global anti-corruption and anti-money laundering efforts. The practice of digitalisation in anti-corruption in the Asia-Pacific region, and how the private sector has made effective use of technologies to promote transparency were also discussed. The second day shifted the focus to the challenges for anti-corruption and law enforcement practitioners in implementing digital tools to anti-corruption, for instance, the lack of digital infrastructure and disparity among economies, lack of digital skills and literacy, and the need to balance fundamental rights and government efficiency in delivering public services. The Workshop also saw case studies and best practices of several APEC economies in using digital tools effectively in their anti-corruption efforts. Overall this project received positive feedbacks with over 150 participants from 17 out of 21 APEC economies including participants from international organisations.

Next, on 17 and 18 February respectively, the NACC hosted the plenary meetings of the APEC Anti-Corruption and Transparency Experts' Working Group (ACTWG) and the Anti-Corruption Authorities and Law Enforcements Agencies Network (ACT-NET), with the NACC President, Police General Watcharapol Prasarnrajkit, as the Chair. The plenary meetings are an annual platform for APEC economies to share experiences and best practices about current anti-corruption efforts, discuss new trends in fighting corruption or issues of common interests in the anti-corruption arena, and strengthen regional cooperation. The outcome is to provide a basis for developing anti-corruption measures in their home economies.

At the 34th ACTWG plenary meeting, the working group endorsed this year's Work Plan, outlining activities and deliverables the group aims to achieve in 2022. The members also discussed the Multi-Year Strategic Plan drafted by Thailand, which will work as a guiding document for the working group for the next 4 years, and agreed to provide more inputs and comments before the final endorsement at the next meeting in August. In addition to this, the members shared their updates on anti-corruption efforts and projects, and discussed the possibility that the working group can engage with other APEC fora, international organisations, the private sector and civil society. At this meeting, the NACC shared Thailand's progress on revising law to better implement the United Nations Convention against Corruption and international standards.

At the 9th ACT-NET meeting, the members exchanged experience and discussed the challenges they faced in cross-border corruption cases, particularly on investigation, denying safe haven to those engaged in corruption and asset recovery. The NACC took the floor to reaffirm the readiness to cooperate with foreign counterparts to combat corruption.

In August, the NACC will host the second plenary meeting of the ACTWG. If circumstances permit, the event will be held at a physical hosting venue in Chiang Mai. The NACC plans to host another APEC project entitled the Panel Discussion on Empowering the Media's Inclusion in the Fight against Corruption under the forum. This time the project will focus on the role of media and journalists in fighting corruption through investigative reporting, and how the media can be empowered in this regard. After the working group's endorsement at the end of last year, the project is currently being reviewed by the APEC Secretariat against APEC's assessment criteria.

The deliverables of the meetings and projects will, in the longer term, contribute to a more favourable, transparent business environment and sustainable and inclusive growth in the Asia-Pacific region. This is in alignment with Thailand's Host Year Priorities to advance agenda in support of restoring COVID-19-affected economies: (1) OPEN to all opportunities to boost trade and investment (2) CONNECT in all dimensions to reboot connectivity within the region, and (3) BALANCE in all aspects for a balanced, sustainable and inclusive growth.

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