



PECC to “Secure the Region’s Future”



12 August 2003

When the 500 or so delegates congregate at the ICC on 1st September for the Pacific Economic Cooperation Council XV General Meeting in Brunei Darussalam, they will have one question on their minds: how to secure the future of the region?

PECC, whose general meetings happen every two years, groups 23 member economies of the Pacific Rim.

While PECC’s geographical footprints are roughly similar to the better-known APEC grouping, the tripartite nature of its membership, from government, business and academia, sets it apart from the first-track APEC process which primarily gathers only government officials.

It is precisely this that makes PECC an influential and interesting forum. Members participate in their personal capacities that make for interesting often-heated debates and discussions. PECC has the connections though – it is one of the three Official Observers of APEC and has a place at the table in all APEC officials and Ministerial meetings.

His Majesty the Sultan and the Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam will officially open the conference with a dinner keynote address. President Arroyo of the Philippines, Prime Minister Thaksin of Thailand and the Host of APEC 2003 and DPM Abdullah Badawi of Malaysia will also deliver their own keynotes addresses on September 3 to help shape the final outcome of the meeting.

In the first session on the region’s political and economic outlook, participants will have the opportunity to listen to renowned speakers such as Noordin Sopiee of ISIS Malaysia, Singapore’s Minister of State Raymond Lim, Indonesia’s Jusuf Wanandi, Charles Morrison from the East-West Center in the U.S., Deputy Foreign Minister Fujisaki of Japan and former French Prime Minister Michel Rocard.

The session on international trade and the WTO includes speakers such as Philippe Legrain, the brilliant young author (at 29) of “Open world: the truth about globalisation” and economists such as Jean-Pierre Lehmann of the world-famous IMD business school, Long Yongtu, the man that brought China into the WTO, Mari Pangestu and Bijit Bora of the WTO.

The session on finance will feature, among others, HSBC Chairman David Eldon, John Ridding of the Financial Times and Jeffrey Koo of Chinatrust Bank. They will discuss the health and future of the regional financial architecture since the outbreak of the 1997 financial and economic crisis.

Roger Bounds of Shell, Hitoshi Suzuki of Tokyo Power and Murray Jackson of New Zealand’s Genesis Power will appear in the panel on the future of energy in the region in an important strategic session chaired by Brunei Shell’s Chris Finlayson.

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Former Philippines foreign secretary and E-ASEAN Taskforce Chairman Roberto Romulo will team up with Adama Samassekou, President of the PrepCom of the World Summit on Information Society and others to look at the task ahead on public-private sector partnerships on ICT and knowledge-based development.

The important final session will deal with the future of the region. Speakers such as India’s Foreign Secretary Kanwal Sibal, Daniel Wagner of the ADB, Timothy Ong of Asia Inc. and Hadi Soesastro of Indonesia will try to see how the region will fare over the next decade.

Dr. Victor Fung, Chairman of Li & Fung, would set the scene the night before as a special guest speaker at a “dinner and conversation”, with questions taken in town hall style.

The other delegates coming for the conference are made up of some of the best minds and speakers in the region and are too many to include in the panels. They themselves would make up a veritable and impressive list.

For media accreditation please visit website: www.pecc.net/PECC2003Brunei/media.htm

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