



PRESS RELEASE
MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND ECONOMY

**ASIA PACIFIC ECONOMIC COOPERATION (APEC)
FIRST SENIOR OFFICIALS' MEETING
10 February 2026
Guangzhou, People's Republic of China**



Photo Source: APEC People's Republic of China

1. Yang Mulia Dr. Hajah May Fa'ezah binti Haji Ahmad Ariffin, Permanent Secretary (Economy, Trade and Industry), Ministry of Finance and Economy (MOFE) attended the First APEC Senior Officials Meeting (SOM1) which was held on 10 February 2026 in Guangzhou, People's Republic of China. The meeting was preceded by APEC ASEAN Caucus Meeting and APEC Senior Officials' Retreat on 9 February 2026.
2. Hosted by the People's Republic of China under the 2026 APEC theme, "Building an Asia-Pacific Community to Prosper Together," SOM1 marked the start of a series of APEC meetings throughout the year leading up to the APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting in November 2026.
3. The Meeting was officiated by His Excellency. Wang Yi, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China. In his opening address, His Excellency highlighted

the Asia-Pacific region's role as a key driver of global growth and reaffirmed APEC's commitment to openness, regional economic integration and people-centred development amid an increasingly uncertain global environment. He also outlined People's Republic of China's priorities for APEC 2026, including strengthening trade and investment cooperation, enhancing connectivity and supply chain resilience, advancing the Free Trade Area of the Asia-Pacific (FTAAP) agenda, and accelerating digital, green and innovation-driven growth to ensure that the benefits of development are shared widely across the region.

4. During the meeting, Yang Mulia Dr. Hajah May Fa'ezah, highlighted:
 - i. Brunei Darussalam's ongoing commitment to strengthening regional economic cooperation and an open, predictable trading environment that supports long-term growth. She underscored the importance of a rules-based multilateral trading system, with the World Trade Organization (WTO) at its core, and welcomed APEC's role in supporting this through dialogue, cooperation and capacity-building;
 - ii. Brunei Darussalam's support for continued work on the FTAAP as a long-term aspiration for the region, noting that China's APEC 2026 priorities are well aligned with this direction. Brunei welcomed the proposed deliverables for the year, including initiatives related to the FTAAP and trade digitalisation; and
 - iii. The value of APEC's economic and technical cooperation work in strengthening local capabilities, institutions and businesses in Brunei Darussalam, particularly MSMEs. Brunei welcomed ongoing cooperation in areas such as food security, human resources development, energy and demographic resilience, which contribute directly to national development priorities, and overall sustainable and resilient regional economic growth

5. Also held prior to SOM1 Meeting were the sectoral committees and working groups engaging in various areas of cooperation such as health, anti-corruption, standards, customs, structural reforms and business mobility.

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Date: 12th February 2026
Reference: KKW/ADM/70