

APEC Summit Ends, Greater Optimism On Global Economy

BERNAMA

11/11/2017

DA NANG (Vietnam), Nov 11 (Bernama) -- The 25th Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Economic Leaders' Summit (AELM) wrapped up with a greater sense of optimism about the world's economy, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak said.

He said the sentiment was bolstered by a presentation by International Monetary Fund (IMF) Managing Director Christine Lagarde who stated that global economic recovery has been better than expected.

"This is a good news to APEC. With the economic recovery, we can increase cooperation, trade facilitation and regional integration," Najib told Malaysian media here at the end of the two-day APEC Leaders' Summit.

Lagarde said the world economy expanded by 3.2 per cent last year.

It is expected to increase by 3.6 per cent this year and 3.7 per cent in 2018.

"She gave an analogy regarding the stronger global economic recovery. She said now that the sun is out, it is time to fix the roof," Najib said, adding that economies should take advantage of the bullish economic outlook to prepare for the rainy day and strengthen them.

"If you are a deficit country, reduce the deficit. If you need to make reforms, make the reform. If you are a high-debt country, reduce the debt so that you have more fiscal space if the economy turns sour," he said.

Najib said APEC has achieved significant success and since its inception, its member economies have tirelessly reduced barriers to trade and investments.

The results reflected that while APEC accounted for about 40 per cent of the world's population, it accounted about 60.5 per cent of global Gross Domestic Product (GDP), 51 per cent of global trade and 53.1 per cent of global Foreign Direct Investment (FDI).

APEC's total trade in goods and services has also increased five fold since its inception in 1989 to US\$15.9 trillion in 2016 and intra-APEC merchandise trade has grown more than nine-fold to US\$15.5 trillion in 2014.

Najib said during the summit, leaders also recognised the importance of Internet and digital economy as the key driver of global economy and APEC must be at the forefront.

"Malaysia has suggested the establishment of an ad-hoc steering group on Internet and digital economy. The meeting also recognised the contribution of Malaysia in the form of the roadmap of APEC's digital economy," Najib said, adding that Malaysia also supported Vietnam's suggestion for a working group to suggest a post-2020 vision for APEC.

It should be exciting, inspirational and attainable as Malaysia would chair APEC in 2020, he said.

Najib said he also mentioned about the Digital Free Trade Zone that has a lot of traction among APEC leaders.

"I also raise concern about human capital development and the need for us to revamp our school curriculum to ensure that we are producing the right kind of people for Industry 4.0 and for jobs that have yet to exist," he added.

Najib shared that the leaders also committed to attaining the Bogor Goals of free and open trade and investments in the region.

"We agree to accelerate efforts to address WTO-inconsistent barriers to trade and investment and take concrete actions towards the achievement of the Bogor Goals by 2020.

"We also note the importance of non-discriminatory, reciprocal and mutually advantageous trade and investment frameworks," he said.

Commenting on the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), which is now to be known as the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP), Najib said the recent progress means that there is a moral commitment among the 11 member states.

"After this, there will be work programmes to be done and Malaysia, of course, continues to maintain that we have to address our sensitive social economic policies such as Bumiputera preferences and measures for public health.

"We do not sacrifice our important domestic agenda as the result agreeing to adopt TPP," said Najib.

The member states of the ambitious trade pact have reached a deal to proceed after a tumultuous series of negotiations in Da Nang that saw a no-show from Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau during the TPP Leaders' Meeting, almost derailing the efforts to revive the agreement.

-- BERNAMA

© 2017 BERNAMA. All Rights Reserved. [Disclaimer](#) | [Privacy Policy](#) | [Security Policy](#)

Source: <http://www.bernama.com/bernama/v8/newsindex.php?id=1409567>