

## **“Women Leaders Network from 1996 – 2010”**

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The Women Leaders Network of APEC was founded in 1996 in Manila, Republic of the Philippines by a group of women from different sectors who wanted to have a positive impact and participation into policies being developed and implemented by the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation and member economies. This presentation gives the background of WLN as well as provides ideas for future directions. Originally, the purpose of WLN was defined as: To seek ways and develop strategies so that women's concerns are heard, their aspirations considered, and their involvement firmly established when decisions and policies are made within APEC.' WLN has met every year at the invitation of the host economy and has made recommendations which have led to the hosting of two ministerial meetings for Ministers Responsible for Women, the creation of the Gender Focal Point Network, the creation of the Micro Enterprise SubWorking Group, international trading networks, and technology training for young women as well as the unique contribution of indigenous women in APEC. WLN consists of women leaders representing women from the private sector, public sector, women in technology, NGO's, academia and indigenous women, each of whom brings her own unique perspective. Every year, WLN is invited by Ministers of the host economy to present its recommendations on the priorities and policies as identified by the host economy that year. Since 1996 more than 5,000 women have attended WLN events which has led to greater participation of women in the APEC process as well as a better understanding of APEC by women. This presentation will provide the basis for the meeting as well as discussion points for the future roles and partners for WLN.