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## APEC ON LEVERAGING ADVANCES IN HEALTH IT

Washington, D.C. – A new report by The National Bureau of Asian Research (NBR) for the APEC Health Working Group and in cooperation with the Life Sciences Innovation Forum (LSIF) highlights observations and recommendations from APEC delegates gathered at an August 2009 APEC workshop on how health information technology (HIT) can help combat infectious diseases and improve health care delivery in the Asia-Pacific.

In “**Leveraging Advances in Health IT to Prevent and Combat the Spread of Avian Influenza and Other Infectious Diseases**,” stakeholders representing science, medicine, policy, industry, and public health share experiences and ideas on how to best leverage advances in HIT. A repeated theme was that HIT is a means, and not an end, to a healthier world. Out of seminar discussions, a challenge arose for APEC to:

- **Take advantage of this moment of opportunity** when the interest and influence of policymakers are aligned with health needs to develop domestic and international health systems equipped to prevent and combat disease through effective use of HIT.
- **Build Health Information Exchange (HIE)** between APEC economies. There is a need to develop **data standards** with consideration of technical compatibility within identified priority areas, such as bio-surveillance, cross-border care, and epidemiology.
- **Cultivate political leadership**; learn how to speak “politician.” This includes clearly demonstrating the value of HIT with simple and “quick win” solutions.
- **Develop better procurement strategies** to help reduce waste, minimize inefficiency costs, and institutionalize interoperability.

APEC is the only Asia-Pacific multilateral organization in which the U.S. participates at the summit level. Since the first APEC Leaders’ meeting in 1993, the forum has grown to address a wide range of important trade issues and has facilitated closer linkages and rapid economic growth among its members.

NBR has extensive experience in convening outcome oriented, cross-sectoral meetings on leveraging HIT advances for better outcomes. NBR also serves as the Secretariat for the Pacific Health Summit, which seeks to connect science, industry, and policy for a healthier world.

For more information please visit [www.nbr.org](http://www.nbr.org).

*Founded in 1989 with a major grant from the Henry M. Jackson Foundation, NBR is an independent, nonpartisan research institution committed to informing and strengthening policy. NBR also helps train the next generation of scholars who concentrate on Asia. [www.nbr.org](http://www.nbr.org)*