

APEC forum for women leaders to be held in Singapore

By Joanne Chan, 938LIVE | Posted: 15 July 2009 1826 hrs

SINGAPORE: Women can take part more actively in business and trade, and still balance family commitments, said Minister of State for Community Development, Youth and Sports, Yu-Foo Yee Shoon, on Wednesday.

She added that this balance can be aided by the use of information and communications technology (ICT).

Such gender issues will be among the five topics that top women leaders from 21 economies will discuss at this year's APEC Meeting of the Women Leaders Network (WLN).

The 14th meeting of the network will be hosted by Singapore on August 4 and 5.

Speaking to reporters at a media conference on Wednesday morning, Mrs Yu-Foo said the network is a premier platform to promote the participation of women in economic and trade-related activities.

She added: "Through this platform, we get the women leaders - especially business leaders - to network, to exchange experiences and hope that from here, they can develop more trade, more business, more ICT programmes and so on for women."

As an example of how technology can enable greater female participation, the network committee has arranged for video conferencing for participants in South Korea.

Mrs Yu-Foo said this pilot initiative was based on feedback gathered from some participants last year.

"When we were in Peru (for the 13th APEC WLN meeting), sisters from other countries told us that some of them could not come because they were owners of small and medium-sized businesses or the family business," she recalled.

"They could not put their children aside to fly to Peru, so I suggested – why don't we start this teleconferencing?"

More than 400 people will be attending the two-day forum. After the meeting, the group will present a set of policy recommendations to APEC ministers and leaders to add to the APEC agenda.

Singapore will also host an APEC digital economy forum for women on August 3.



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Mrs Yu-Foo Yee Shoon (file pic)