RESOLUTION ON CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Having met in Dhaka for the Sixth Asia-Pacific High-Level Employers’ Conference, on 2 and 3 December 2003,

Recalling the objective of the Confederation of Asia-Pacific Employers (CAPE) to make the environment of the Asia-Pacific region an attractive and better place to do business in, as well as to promote social and economic development for its people,

Noting the increasing calls on business to promote and implement good practice in the areas of labour and the environment

Noting further that good practices enhance customer and investor confidence, thereby increasing access to global markets, investment and competitiveness

Noting also the central responsibility of business is to perform well and succeed, and in so doing they generate wealth, jobs and incomes, thus realising the aspiration of societies to improve standards of living

Affirming that the management of each company has to take responsibility and initiatives for its own expression and implementation of corporate social responsibility on a voluntary basis, that corporate social responsibility must make business sense and that prescriptive approaches can seriously undermine the ability of companies to perform optimally,

Concerned that some businesses may not always taken the lead on corporate social responsibility, and that non-business actors often participate in the debate on these issues without sufficient understanding of how businesses operate

Recognizing that the responsibility of each company directly corresponds to the impact that the company has on society and on the environment, and that the nature of the action to be taken is correspondingly variable,

Determined that corporate social responsibility standards should not be used to deny access to global markets or to give to business responsibilities that properly belong to States

Endorsing the approach of the International Organization of Employers on Corporate Social Responsibility as reflected in the paper adopted at its General Council on 2 June 2003

We, the employers’ organizations of the Asia Pacific region, resolve to:

1) Continue to promote and support voluntary corporate social responsibility initiatives amongst our member companies

2) Provide leadership for national level initiatives in the area of CSR

3) Collaborate with each other in regional initiatives to promote appropriate corporate social responsibility policies that take account of business needs and affirm globally shared values

4) Work together to enhance the image of the Asia-Pacific region as a place where business is done with due respect for globally shared values and principles in the areas where commercial and social values intersect, such as labour and the environment.