



## ASEF PRESS RELEASE

### *ASEF Scenarios show the way*

13 June 2011

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### ***Asia-Europe Foundation Scenarios show the way Strategies for pandemic preparedness***

*Public sector mechanisms are not effective enough to prepare for future pandemic threats. The recent outbreak of the E. coli EHEC bacteria in Europe is one such example that underlines how lack of anticipation on the side of government and society can be dangerous and costly - this was part of a set of recommendations brought together for pandemic preparedness through scenario planning approach by the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF) on 13<sup>th</sup> June during a public event at the Plaza Athénée Hotel in Bangkok. Dr. Siriwat Tiptaradol, Deputy Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Public Health of Thailand, was the guest of honour for the occasion.*

Through this event, ASEF introduced a series of scenarios under the name of ASEF-ASAP (Accurate Pandemics, Active Preparedness) Scenarios that cover a range of possibilities to prepare for future pandemics and public health emergencies in Asia and Europe. Highlighting the need for scenario planning in pandemic preparedness, the ASEF Director for Intellectual Exchange, Ms Sol Iglesias says, "Public-private partnership is a key to pandemic preparedness, with civil society actively involved". Elaborating this point she added, "After the relatively mild H1N1, a lot of trust needs to be re-built so that we don't get lulled into a false sense of security. We need to be reasonably vigilant still."

This sharing of the ASEF-ASAP scenarios was followed by a panel discussion and an interactive question and answer session was attended by representatives from the Thai ministries, embassies based in Bangkok, Thai academia, chambers of commerce, UN agencies and other international non-profit organisations and the media. Mr Hitoshi Murakami, Regional Coordinating Officer from the United Nations System Influenza Coordination Asia-Pacific Hub and Mr William Kuek, Group Safety Health Environment Manager from Nestlé were amongst the panellists for the day.

A two-day strategy development workshop for multi-sectoral pandemic preparedness preceded this public event. One of the outcomes of the workshop was the set of recommendations enclosed with this press release.

#### **About the event**

On the 13 June 2011 (09.30 AM – 12.05 PM), the scenarios for pandemic preparedness were launched through creative multi-media presentations. Visitors experienced the scenarios through short animated films and more detailed information was shared through a digital book. ASEF facilitators explained the story behind each scenario – how each scenario was developed and how every scenario is vulnerable to possible pandemic threats.

All these resources including the animated films, scenario development report and digital book will be available on the ASEF website at [www.asef.org](http://www.asef.org)

**To access these materials and to know more about the ASEF-ASAP Scenarios, please contact Smita at [debasmita.dasgupta@asef.org](mailto:debasmita.dasgupta@asef.org)**

## About ASEF Public Health Network

The ASEF Public Health Network is a participatory platform which encourages public health dialogue between Asia and Europe. The Network is a part of the Initiative of Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) on the Rapid Containment of Pandemic Influenza, which was launched in May 2009 during the 9<sup>th</sup> ASEM Foreign Ministers' Meeting.

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## About the Organisation:



The Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF) promotes greater mutual understanding between Asia and Europe through intellectual, cultural and people-to-people exchanges. Through ASEF, civil society concerns are included as a vital component of deliberations of the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM\*). ASEF was established in February 1997 by the participating governments of ASEM and has since implemented over 500 projects, engaging over 15,000 direct participants as well as reaching out to a much wider audience in Asia and Europe. [www.asef.org](http://www.asef.org)

\* ASEM now brings together 46 member states (Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Cambodia, China, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Indonesia, India, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Korea, Laos, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Malta, Mongolia, Myanmar, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Pakistan, the Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Thailand, United Kingdom, Vietnam) plus the European Commission and the ASEAN Secretariat. [www.aseminfoboard.org](http://www.aseminfoboard.org)