

JOINT PRESS RELEASE



2nd Asia-Europe Young Urban Leaders Dialogue "Transforming Lifestyles, Designing Sustainable Cities"

26-28 July 2010
Shanghai, China

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Young Urban Leaders of Asia and Europe meet at the Shanghai World Expo

26 July 2010, Shanghai - The 2nd Asia-Europe Young Urban Leaders Dialogue (AEYULD) opened today at the Madrid Pavilion site in the Shanghai World Expo. 29 young professionals from 26 countries in Asia and Europe will exchange ideas and expertise on key topics of urban development and sustainability under the theme of "Transforming Lifestyles, Designing Sustainable Cities" from 26-28 July 2010.

The Dialogue is jointly organised by the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF), Madrid Global (Madrid City Hall Office for International Strategy and Action), the Shanghai People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries (SPAFFC) and Casa Asia. Ambassador Dominique Girard, Executive Director of ASEF; Mr Ignacio Niño, Chief Executive Officer of Madrid Global and general coordinator of the Madrid Pavilion; and Mr Wang Xiaoshu, Executive Vice President of SPAFFC, opened the event.

The Asia-Europe Young Urban Leaders Dialogue programme provides a platform to exchange ideas and good practices to develop a new way of managing cities.

Since its establishment in 1997, the ASEF has brought together people from Asia and Europe to encourage dialogue and action between the two regions. "There is no better backdrop for the Asia-Europe Young Urban Leaders Dialogue than the Shanghai World Expo," said Ambassador Girard. "China is bringing together millions of people from all over the world to Shanghai in order to learn from each other; ASEF, together with its partners, is bringing together young people from Asia and Europe to exchange their ideas and perspectives on urban sustainability."

He added: "Organisations like ASEF are important in creating platforms for dialogue. ASEF brings people together. Even if they don't think the same way or if their ideas are opposed to each other, they get together and gain something from that experience. While we may all have different histories and experiences, we have common goals."

China's representative to the Dialogue Mr Huang Haibo, a doctoral candidate at the University of Cork in Ireland, drew lessons from both Asia and Europe. He said: "A good urban leader must first be a good learner. It is invaluable to learning best practices from living and working in other cities." Mr Huang is an expert in Geographical Information Systems (GIS) and its application to urban planning and coastal management.

For more information on the Asia-Europe Young Urban Leaders Dialogue,
kindly visit the ASEF website: <http://www.asef.org>.

Programme contacts:

- **Mr Joel G Bassig**, Project Officer, People-to-People Exchange, Asia-Europe Foundation
Tel: +65 6874 9713 | Email: joel.bassig@asef.org
- **Ms Nuria Fron González**, Consejera Técnica, Oficina de Estrategia y Acción Internacional, "Madrid Global" Ayuntamiento de Madrid
Tel.: +34 91 5882387 | Email: frongn@munimadrid.es

Media contacts:

- **Ms Theresa Cua**, Project Officer, Public Affairs, Asia-Europe Foundation
Tel: +65 6874 9713 | Email: theresa.cua@asef.org
- **Ms Cristina Mateo**, Communications Department for the Madrid Pavilion, Oficina de Estrategia y Acción Internacional, "Madrid Global" Ayuntamiento de Madrid
Tel.: +34 91 5882387 | Email: mateormc@munimadrid.es

About the Organisers

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 450 projects, engaging over 15,000 direct participants as well as reaching out to a much wider audience in Asia and Europe. www.asef.org

* ASEM now brings together 43 member states (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, Pakistan, the Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Thailand, United Kingdom, Vietnam) plus the European Commission and the ASEAN Secretariat. www.aseinfoboard.org

Madrid Global, Madrid City Hall Office for International Strategy and Action - The main competences of Madrid Global include: management and execution of the competences related with international affairs, international projection of the City, planning and development of plans and strategies of international positioning, promotion of private-public investment partnerships and support of the Olympic bid. - <http://www.munimadrid.es/madridglobal>; <http://www.madrid2010shanghai.com>

Shanghai People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries (SPAFFC) - The Association aims to enhance friendship and understanding between the people of Shanghai and the peoples around the world, to promote mutually beneficial exchanges and cooperation among different countries, and to maintain world peace and promote common development. www.shfao.gov.cn

Casa Asia was born with the priority objective of promoting and carrying out projects and activities that contribute towards greater mutual awareness, boosting relations between Spain and Asian and Pacific countries, particularly in institutional, economic, academic and cultural spheres. <http://www.casaasia.es>