



# PRESS RELEASE

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## FINAL REPORT ON ASIA-EUROPE PERCEPTIONS AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS ON RACISM AND XENOPHOBIA

For the 7<sup>th</sup> instalment of the ASEF Talks on the Hill series, a group of 15 high-level individuals comprising of academics, policymakers, think-tank executives and NGO activists gathered recently in Barcelona and were challenged to 3 days of intensive discussion and debate taking an open and honest look at racism and xenophobia in Asia and Europe. The meeting was entitled “**Beyond Black and White: Confronting Modern Realities of Racism and Xenophobia in Asia and Europe**<sup>1</sup>.”

**The final report of this meeting elaborates on the major ideas and recommendations that emerged during discussions.** This final report as well as the list of participants and other relevant documents can be downloaded at <http://www.civdialogue.asef.org>. Some of the issues addressed in the meeting included the role of education in perpetuating racist stereotypes and ideas, immigration and labour migration, the media and national and international policies. Bertrand Fort, Director of Intellectual Exchange, ASEF points out, “*While a very sensitive and pertinent topic, **racism and xenophobia** are not subjects that are talked about openly and frankly in both regions of Asia and Europe. This meeting was unique in bringing together participants to deliberate on these issues from a multi-stakeholder perspective, while keeping in focus the shared objectives of fighting racism and xenophobia in Asia and Europe.*”

In line with its mission to bridge civil societies from Asia and Europe and to be the interface between civil society representatives/ organisations and the 38 member governments of ASEM<sup>2</sup>, ASEF has distributed this report widely and in particular to the relevant public ministries and agencies of member countries.

The Asia Europe Foundation was established in 1997 to promote relations between the countries of ASEAN + 3 and the European Union, and to act as a bridge between civil society and governments. It established a “**Cultures & Civilisations Dialogue programme**” in 2003 to address contentious issues between the two regions in countering the perceived “Clash of Civilisations.” Through various activities, this programme brings together hundreds of individuals from Asia and Europe each year on issues ranging from the media to gender to religions, culture and interfaith dialogue. For more information on the activities of the Cultures & Civilisations Dialogue programme, please visit our dedicated website at <http://www.civdialogue.asef.org> or contact Sohni Kaur at [sohni.kaur@asef.org](mailto:sohni.kaur@asef.org).

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<sup>1</sup> This meeting was organised with the support of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, UK.

<sup>2</sup> With the enlargement of the EU and ASEAN, our member states now include: Austria, Belgium, Brunei, Cambodia, China, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Korea, Laos, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Malta, Myanmar, Netherlands, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Thailand, United Kingdom, Vietnam and the European Commission.