



ASEM@10

‘Connecting Civil Societies of Asia and Europe’

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PROCEEDINGS

Prepared by the Asia-Europe Foundation in partnership with the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland, the International Institute for Asian Studies, the European Institute for Asian Studies and the Japan Centre for International Exchange



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I. Executive Summary

“**ASEM@10 – Connecting Civil Societies of Asia and Europe**” was co-organised by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland, the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF), the International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS), the European Institute for Asian Studies (EIAS) and the Japan Center for International Exchange (JCIE) and hosted by the Finnish Parliament. The conference provided a venue for interaction for organisations from Asia and Europe, who are actively involved in enhancing the role of civil society in both regions.

The **Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) process underwent a self-review after its first 10 years**. Held prior to the ASEM 6 Summit, this meeting was a chance for 60 top-calibre participants to explore how ASEM has promoted civil society concerns common to both regions in the past ten years and where new areas of cooperation and interaction of the main sectors of the Asia-Europe community (government, business sector, NGOs, academics, media, researchers, cultural houses, think tanks, and others) could be found.

For the first time representatives from the Asia-Europe Peoples Forum (AEPF) and the Asia-Europe Business (AEBF) Forum were invited together with range of other sectors of civil society on a single platform, covering both policy issues as well as concrete cooperation and to share their experience, expertise and knowledge on the respective issues in the context of Asia-Europe Relations.

The conference started with an Opening Session, presenting a research report by the Japan Center for International Exchange and the University of Helsinki, commissioned by the governments of Finland and Japan reviewing ASEM's achievements over the past decade, which was first presented at the ASEM Senior Officials' Meeting in Vienna, Austria, March 2006. This process was also accompanied by ASEF and JCIE, who organised a conference for ASEM experts and a public symposium in Tokyo, in December 2005, referred to as Phase 1 of the project “**ASEM@10**”.

The presentation of the research report was followed by a panel on the state and future of ASEM, as seen from the perspectives of the Asia-Europe People's Forum (AEPF), the Asia-Europe Business Forum (AEBF), youth (represented by the ASEF University Alumni Network) and academe.

In order to encourage and facilitate open and frank discussions leading to clear outcomes, this conference featured two workshops which, respectively, discussed: (1) Sustainable Development and Energy Security, and (2) Information & Communication Technology and Cultural Diversity. The workshop themes were closely related to two out of four broad areas of co-operation¹ of the ASEM 6 Summit, namely sustainable development and cultures & civilisations dialogue.

At the end of these two days, **concrete, feasible solutions and recommendations** were formulated for the enhancement of Asia-Europe partnerships in both workshops resulting in commitments by participants to working together in four areas of cross cultural communication and on the international climate change regime.

¹ The four broad areas of co-operation of the ASEM VI Summit are: (1) strengthening multilateralism and addressing security threats; (2) globalisation and competitiveness; (3) sustainable development including environment and energy security; and, (4) dialogue among cultures and civilisations

Workshop 1 made recommendations on the following areas:

- Improve the policy environment for energy development and management
- Enhance the exchange of know-how and the development and application of clean technology
- Strengthen multi-stakeholder participation and partnerships
- Institution building and strengthening with specific recommendations to ASEM and the Asia-Europe Environment Forum

As a result of the discussions in workshop 2 four working groups on specific areas have been set up to identify possible spin-off projects covering the following areas:

- Pop culture
- Media
- Research and education and digital libraries
- Unity in Diversity

Assigned workshop rapporteurs reported on their discussions at a concluding plenary open to ASEM officials, journalists and high-level editors as well as youth and other civil society representatives.

The meeting ended with keynote addresses by Mr. Ban Ki-Moon, former Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade of the Republic of Korea and; as of this writing, newly appointed UN Secretary General and former Finnish President Mr. Martti Ahtisaari. Finnish Foreign Minister Mr. Erkki Tuomioja chaired the session.

This final report of conference proceedings will be addressed to the ASEM governments and will be published, including concrete proposals for greater involvement of Civil Society into the ASEM process, and how to enhance the co-operation between Civil Society groups from both regions.

II. Report of Proceedings

A. Presentation of the research report by the Japan Center for International Exchange and the University of Helsinki

One of the findings of the research was that ASEM after ten years has provided a useful platform for the exchange of information on a very broad range of issues. However, the following conclusions about ASEM in its first decade were drawn;

- ASEM has yet to deepen dialogue on these broad range issues to move into substantive cooperation.
- ASEM was suffering from an identity crisis with a proliferation of initiatives and the lack of institutional mechanisms to manage the process more effectively and efficiently.
- ASEM's relevance in the broader international context has also been questioned. Its official *raison d'être* and original objective of enhancing the balance of power in the triangular relationship between US, East Asia and Europe has not been realised.
- ASEM also suffered from a lack of public profile.

The research proposed a pragmatic, step-by-step approach to strengthening Asia-Europe partnership and the ASEM process:

- ASEM should avoid ad hoc programmes and one-off projects or initiatives.
- Since ASEM is a forum of equal partners and decision-making is by consensus, to circumvent the problem of inertia from lack of agreement, the principle of "variable leadership" and "coalition of the willing" can be applied particularly in functional projects and cluster of issues.
- Raising ASEM's profile is seen as one of the biggest challenges. To this end, efforts must be taken to enhance ASEM's profile by tapping into the resources and expertise of the institutions and network linked to ASEM such as ASEF, the Asia-Europe Business Forum (AEBF) , the Asia-Europe Peoples' Forum (AEPF), and the ASEF University Alumni Network (ASEFUAN)—among others.
- Some degree of institutionalisation is deemed essential for the smooth function and greater efficiency of the ASEM process. However, the process should not be made too bureaucratic.
- The leaders' summit should be kept informal and interactive, to capitalise on what is initially seen as one of the strengths of ASEM, that leaders interact in a free and open manner.
- With regards to the role of Civil Society within ASEM the following suggestions were made: (1) NGOs should assume a very constructive role in ASEM co-operation; (2) Civil Society initiatives, particularly organised by ASEF, should be linked to the policy process and included more efficiently.

B. Four Commentators on the State and Future of ASEM

B.1. AEPF perspective

The 6th Asia-Europe People's Forum (AEPF), which ended one day prior to the ASEM@10 conference had about 450 registered participants from 30 over countries, representing slightly over 200 non-governmental organisations, peoples organisations, religious groups, trade unions from Asia as well as Europe. The focus of the 6th Asia-Europe People's Forum was on peace and security, democracy and human rights, economic security and social rights.

The following concerns were brought to the participants' attention:

- After 10 years, there does not seem to be an ASEM blue-print that promotes opportunities that benefit all in Asia and Europe.
- ASEM has a continuing democratic deficit. ASEM's work programme has only limited possibilities for regular democratic scrutiny in parliaments in Asia and Europe including the European Parliament.
- Civil society groups in the country were not able to engage ASEM because of a lack of knowledge of how ASEM works. The report adds that the civil society groups in the country lack the confidence and access to the ASEM process. Therefore ASEM should engage AEPF and appreciate its contributions.

The role of Civil Society is to ensure that the Asian and European governments, including the European Commission (EC), develop policies, and a work programme that includes periodic reporting, a monitoring and implementation mechanism. It should be done at the national levels as well. Here, the AEPF, the Asia-Europe Foundation, the Asia-Europe Business Forum and the ASEM trade unions have an important role to play.

B2. AEBF perspective

The Asia-Europe Business Forum (AEBF) was launched as one of the first initiatives at the 1st ASEM Summit held in Bangkok in 1996. Leading businessmen, entrepreneurs and economic experts from ASEM countries meet alongside the ASEM Summits to propose recommendations on enhancing the Asia-Europe economic environment.

The economic relations between Europe and Asia over the last 10 years have developed towards a positive direction. In that period, notwithstanding the Asian financial crisis in 1997, Asia has created US\$ 3300 billion dollars of additional wealth. Europe's mature economies are not moving that quickly, but still created U\$ 2500 billion dollars of additional wealth in Europe.

Since 1996 and the creation of the WTO, which had many shortcomings, a discrepancy between Europe and Asia has been created as Asia is entering very quickly the process of Free Trade Agreements (FTA). Currently there are hundreds trade agreements, which create a new world of multi-bilateralism, rather than the multilateralism that is advocated in Europe.

At the AEBF meeting, which was held right after the ASEM@10 conference the following issues were addressed:

- How to create a stable economic environment by removing obstacles to trade and investment will be removed;
- How to support from the ASEM governments by removing discriminatory rules and treatment and ensuring agreed common rules in order to support competitiveness of companies;
- The need for good governance and transparency to ensure fair competition;
- How to encourage free trade arrangements (FTAs) to increase growth and prosperity.

B3. Youth perspective

From the outset, ASEM leaders have viewed youth as the future's promise and recognised that cultural, artistic and educational activities involving youth and students reinforce the links between Asia and Europe. The key international players include youth and youth-based organisations including the coordinating committee for international voluntary service, the European Youth Forum, the North-South Centre of the Council of Europe, the Asian Youth Council and the Asian Students' Association, among others.

However the process of Asia-Europe co-operation in the field of youth involvement exists largely because it has been sustained by the Asia-Europe Foundation, which is itself an initiator and key player. ASEF's constant support is embodied in programmes that promote educational exchanges, cross-cultural learning and youth-to-youth dialogue such as the ASEF University programme, the ASEM Youth Dialogue, and the young leaders' symposia.

On several occasions, youth priority issues have mirrored priorities on the ASEM agenda, signifying youth perspectives on these issues. ASEM benefits from a translation of rhetoric into reality, but three key challenges were identified:

- Inadequate institutional support and funding for youth initiatives;
- a disaggregated, organisational structure in Asia, which makes it difficult for Asian organisations to communicate with each other and European organisations, and which also hinders access to information necessary for inter-regional networking; And,
- the lack of a regular channel of communication and representation, in conjoining non-official processes within ASEM, namely the Asia-Europe People's Forum and the Asia Europe Business Forum.

B4. Academic perspective: ASEM in the Asian media- Initial findings of the 2006 EU perceptions project

The European Studies in Asia (ESiA) is a new initiative initiated at the end of 2005 by ASEF. It is a network to facilitate co-operation among institutions of European Studies in Asia with their counterparts in the Europe Union (EU). ESiAs first joint project, "*EU through the Eyes of Asia: A Comparative Study of Public, Elite and Media Perceptions of the EU in South Korea*,

Singapore, Japan, Thailand and China (Hong Kong and Shanghai)”, seeks to answer the question “What are the dominant images of the EU in the Asian news media discourse?”.²

The following preliminary trends were highlighted:

- In terms of coverage of the EU, print media results were over-all substantive except in two countries; however, the visibility of the EU in TV news was astonishingly low.
- ASEM visibility is even more limited, although some coverage was made on environment-related issues and Finland, as the host of the ASEM VI Summit.
- The Euro is one of the major icons of the EU.

Preliminary recommendations made include that:

- there is a need for a common face for Europe, e.g. through a European Foreign Minister or an external diplomatic action service;
- the Euro is a strong card to shape perception of the EU in its public diplomacy; and,
- greater investment is needed on information campaigns as well as the inclusion of the EU's role in history and current events in school curricula.

C. Summary of Plenary Discussions

Throughout the plenary discussions between the panellists and the audience, a number of questions were raised and debated. Among the key recommendations to ASEM included the following:

1. *While ASEM's informality is an asset, the process requires mechanisms for co-ordination, priority-setting and public communication.* Without an ASEM Secretariat and while the EC co-ordinates the European side, there should be at least an Asian secretariat. Mechanisms to better identify ASEM priorities as well as arrive at common positions on certain issues need to be further developed. As ASEM's visibility needs a boost, a taskforce or mechanism was seen as a necessity. Caution was made on the assumption that ASEM includes a region-to-region dialogue, as East Asia is not a regional entity comparable to the EU.
2. *ASEM needs to expand dialogue on global security.* ASEM governments agree on the principle of multilateralism and further co-operation on global security was recommended. It was argued, however, that while hard security could fall outside ASEM's ambit, there are promising results that should be further advanced in the fields of counter-terrorism and on soft security through inter-faith and inter-cultural dialogue.
3. *ASEM needs to enhance its accountability to its constituents.* Clear mechanisms for civil society (in its broadest sense, including academics, the youth, the media, activists and the business sector) as an agent of ASEM's progress, into ASEM's policy dialogue were advocated in order to bolster both ASEM's role as a government-civil society interface as well as inputs from other stakeholders. In order to further enhance the participatory nature

² The study began in January 2006, encompassing three phases; print and TV media survey, public opinion survey and elite interviews. Interim findings of only the first six months of the media survey were presented. For more information, see <http://www.esia.asef.org>.

of the ASEM process, clear accountability to ASEM's national parliaments and the European Parliament³, was also suggested. Finally, it was stressed that young people, in particular, should have a voice and opportunity to participate in political discourse within the ASEM framework.

4. *ASEM needs to adopt and raise the profile of initiatives from Civil Society.* ASEF activities that bridge Civil Society from Asia and Europe (such as the Asia-Europe Environment Forum), have a considerable multiplier effect at a smaller scale that requires monitoring, further support and possible identification as ASEM activities. A call was made for ASEM and ASEF to take further steps toward concrete bi-regional co-operation, although it was acknowledged that this would probably require greater institutionalisation and resources.
5. *ASEF's financial sustainability must be secured.* Governments need to ensure the financial sustainability of ASEF, as it provides a very solid intellectual foundation for ASEM's political framework.
6. *Greater dialogue on trade and investment issues needed among government, business and civil society.* Given differing views and perceptions on common concerns of trade flows and investment, as well as of the human rights dimension of economic relations between Asia and Europe (including other concerns as labour rights, gender equality and sustainability), further opportunities for discourse were sought.

D. Workshop 1: How can Asia and Europe contribute to sustainable development and energy security?

Summary

The Workshop "How can Asia and Europe contribute to sustainable development and energy security?" was one of two discussion groups of the conference. It was attended by about 35 participants representing a wide range of stakeholder groups including public organisations, civil society organizations, business, research institutes, and academe (see attached list).

The Workshop was co-moderated by Dr. David Stanners, Head of International Co-operation, European Environment Agency and Prof. Akio Morishima, Chair of the Board of Directors, Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES), Japan. Ms. Ella Antonio, President of Earth Council Asia-Pacific, served as Rapporteur.

Dr. Philippe Bergeron, Senior Advisor of the Regional Institute of Environmental Technology, and Prof. Jiahua Pan, Executive Director of the Research Centre for Sustainable Development of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, made introductory presentations. Dr. Bergeron provided an overview of the world energy demand and supply situation and how this adversely impacts on Europe's energy security and sustainable development. He presented the challenges for Europe and recommended some measures to address them. Dr. Pan made a similar presentation for Asia with special focus on China.

Mr. Masanori Kobayashi, Senior Policy Researcher, IGES made a supplementary presentation on Asian perspectives regarding energy security and climate change mitigation. Mr.

³ For the European Parliament, common security policy was raised as a possible area of accountability, at least for the EU side of ASEM.

Bertrand Fort, Deputy Executive Director, Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF) also presented the key recommendations of the Round Table conducted by Asia Europe Environment Forum (AEEF) on energy and climate issues.

The Energy Security Contexts of Asia and Europe

The world energy situation has been under severe strain and this situation is expected to continue in the years ahead. Demand is projected to grow substantially as there continues to be an unequivocal increase in world population and resource use for growth and development, particularly in Asia. Supply, on the other hand, has continuously become precarious for many reasons. The international community faces a number of challenges that will become more acute unless effective countermeasures are taken urgently. Examples of these challenges are the following;

- a. striking a balance between national development objectives and climate change and pollution mitigation imperatives;
- b. reconciliation of national energy policies with regional cooperation;
- c. control of fossil fuel reserves and production by a few countries, most of which are outside Asia and Europe;
- d. geopolitical tensions that create obstacles to energy supply security from producer regions and countries (Caspian region and Persian Gulf) as well as competition over potential areas for resource exploitation that have heightened fossil fuel supply uncertainties;
- e. continuous increase in green house gases that has been causing changes in climate patterns and natural disasters;
- f. untapped potentials of renewable energies due to various constraints particularly in the areas of policies and technology, and
- g. social and political resistance to other components of an energy mix such as nuclear energy.

Together, Europe and Asia hold a critical mass of the world, thus play a crucial role in achieving global energy security and sustainable development. They have the responsibility to address above challenges and contribute to the mitigation of climate change and other adverse environmental effects of energy development. It has, in fact, become imperative for Europe and Asia to enhance cooperation and forge partnerships to effectively achieve energy security and attain sustainable development for mutual benefit.

The two regions are in different environmental and socio-economic conditions and at various levels of economic, policy and institutional development. While they have commonalities in addressing energy and sustainable development issues, the approaches necessary for this purpose widely differ. This reality needs to be taken into account in considering the following recommendations of the workshop.

Recommendations

To ASEM governments and The general public.

1. Improve the policy environment for energy development and management

- Establish appropriate policy and institutional frameworks that would enhance energy security and achieve sustainable development. The frameworks must address the tensions within the energy-development-environment nexus.

- Create a policy regime that would rapidly and appropriately diversify energy mix and improve energy efficiency. Such regime must optimize the use of incentives in a manner that would result in the following, among others;
 - Promotion of market-driven innovations and investments in renewable energy & clean technology as well as use of low-energy consumable products;
 - Increase in share of renewable energy in portfolios of development banks & institutions;
 - Better access of business to development bank lending resources, i.e., interest rates would be lower and requirements less stringent;
 - Level playing field for fuel and energy development and trading (e.g., by removing inefficient subsidies on fossil fuels);
 - Removal of ineffective subsidies in general.

2. Enhance the exchange of know-how and the development and application of clean technology

- Bolster exchange of know-how and technology cooperation for promoting the generation and use of renewable energies between Europe and Asia. In relation to this, the two regions must jointly set the priority for such technology cooperation.
- Improve flexible mechanisms such as clean development mechanism (CDM) to enhance cooperation & promote low carbon technology investment and transfer.
- Encourage and strengthen private business participation in traditional public investment areas such as energy generation and distribution.
- Promote inter-regional partnerships among enterprises particularly for small and medium enterprises.
- Stimulate the commercial applications of low and zero emission technologies.

3. Strengthen multi-stakeholder participation and partnerships

- Promote a multi-stakeholder approach in addressing energy security and sustainable development, i.e., recognize and maximize the important roles of relevant sectors of society particularly civil society, business and investors, local government units, grassroots, research and academic community, and parliamentarians.
- Enable the stakeholders to have meaningful participation in policy and strategy formulation and implementation processes in order to maximize their participation and in addition;
 - Provide assistance to widen knowledge and perspectives in energy and sustainable development issues;
 - Expose and engage stakeholders in discussions on policy issues;
 - Raise awareness and build capacity for promoting sustainable energy use (e.g., sustainable lifestyle, clean technology development & use).
- Ensure comprehensive assessment of the multiple potentials and risks of nuclear energy development through participatory policy dialogue at all levels.

4. Institution building and strengthening

- Europe to continue to provide catalytic technical and financial support to Asia in the promotion of renewable energy and environmentally sound technology and application.
- Strengthen environment ministries in terms of higher level of authority/discretion, budget and staff complement. Related to this, heighten the awareness and appreciation of economic and social ministries through exposure and engagement in discussions pertaining to the environment of issues, plans, strategies, etc.
- Ensure transparency and accountability in governance through, among others, Parliamentary scrutiny
- Remove barriers to trading energy and to developing required national and trans-national infrastructure for promoting energy trade.
- Research institutes and academia to conduct research on successful policies and business models in promoting environmentally sound energy development and application, and disseminate information to a wide range of stakeholders.
- Business to continue to promote and practice corporate social responsibility (CSR) in developing environmentally sound and energy efficient business models.
- Private and commercial banks to provide concessional terms to investments in renewable energy and other environmentally sound technology.
- Multilateral financial institutions to strive to expand the share of renewable energy development in their loan portfolios and consider involving civil society in the review and planning for their lending portfolios.

To ASEM

- Expand dialogue on energy security and sustainable development with other key players outside the 2 regions (e.g., Russia, Middle East, USA).
- Encourage and support joint research programs on strategic policy in energy, environment and sustainable development.
- Create a mechanism for dialogue on energy and environment within the ASEM process.
- Promote engagement of economic and/or finance & foreign affairs ministers in energy related discourses.
- Take the lead in promoting inter-regional cooperation for an effective and equitable Post-2012 global climate regime.

To Asia-Europe Environment Forum

- Continue to provide the platform for inter-regional policy dialogues and create the

mechanism for partnerships on energy security and sustainable development.

- Strengthen partnership activities and network of research institutions and mobilize resources for joint studies.
- Closely link and inter-act the various ASEM platforms & networks (People's Forum; Business Forum; youth programs; media forums) to disseminate ASEM messages and widen the constituency for its priority agenda such as energy security and climate change.
- Further widen and sustain the dissemination of results of all its efforts and forums as its contribution to raising awareness on energy and sustainable issues.

5. Modalities

Whenever possible, above recommendations must be undertaken using any or all of the following modalities:

- Joint researches and case studies in various areas (e.g., policy reforms, environmental impact assessments, production systems);
- Joint publication which could draw from results of joint studies;
- Pilot or demonstration projects for promoting innovative policies and business models;
- Multi-stakeholder forums that exchange lessons especially from good practices and cross-pollinate ideas.

E. Workshop 2: Can ICT be Seen as the New Link for Unity and Cultural Communication between Asia and Europe?

Introduction

The Workshop “Can ICTs be seen as the new link for unity and cultural communication between Asia and Europe?” was one of the two discussion groups of the ASEM@10 conference. It was attended by about 35 participants representing a wide range of stakeholder groups, including public organisations, civil society actors, businesses, researcher institutes and the academia (see attached list).

The Workshop was moderated by Mr Jusuf Wanandi, Vice Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Centre for Strategic and International Studies Foundation. Mr Plamen Tonchev, Head of Asia Unit, Institute of International Economic Relations, acted as Rapporteur.

Prof. Dr. Jo Gröbel, Director of the German Digital Institute, and Ms Hideko Katsumata, Managing Director & Executive Director of the Japan Centre for International Exchange, made introductory presentations.

I. E-readiness and ICT-related issues in Asia and Europe

1. State of things

- Several EU member states top the world-wide list; Japan and South Korea appear high on the Asian list, though not on a global scale.
- There has been a concerted effort in the EU to promote Information Society and e-readiness. A possible lesson would be that a higher degree of coordination will be beneficial for the increase of e-readiness in Asia.
- There is still a long way to go before the digital divide between Europe and Asia is effectively addressed. At the same time, while there is definitely a digital divide, one should not neglect the “analogue divide” (in terms of literacy rates) – i.e. having a computer makes little sense if one is not in a position to use it.
- The digital divide can have a considerable impact in terms of social exclusion, low competitiveness, slanderous and discriminative information, adversarial advocacy, etc.

2. Trends related to ICT developments

As regards general trends;

- Growing capacity and convergence (increasing use of Voice-Over-Internet Protocol technologies, Internet-mobiles), etc;
- Despite the ICT revolution, traditional media will still be around, though their form and content are definitely changing. E.g. radio remains a very powerful medium in less developed countries, though its content will have to change.

As regards modern media, they are marked by;

- Immediacy (in terms of real-time);
- Integration/convergence – e.g. mobile phones will look more and more like micro-computers and micro-TV sets;
- Global reach;
- Yet, inter-/intra-community building (interactive and specific “my space” communities emerging.

Indeed, communities are thriving on the web and are contributing to a global, though some less than benevolent actors (e.g. terrorist organisations) have also been very successful in the use of ICTs.

E-government and e-democracy are also important aspects of the ICT debate.

- The workshop participants feel that the European political elite is in favour of e-government, but less so as regards e-democracy.
- On the other hand, the European Commission is now promoting an on-line consultation process with the European youth.

3. Pros and cons of ICTs

General benefits identified by the participants in the workshop;

- Mobile phones have rendered fixed telephony less necessary;

- Immediate access to information and shorter lead time;
- Increased networking – e.g. ASEM has been instrumental in promoting networking between institutions and civil society actors;
- Business actors, including small companies, can benefit significantly from opportunities provided by the ICT revolution.

Specific benefits for Civil Society Organisations (CSOs);

- Capacity building;
- Communication;
- Advocacy;
- Yet, while the access of CSOs to the ICTs has been increasing, making the best of new technologies (e.g. in terms of advocacy) remains a challenge.

4. Concerns

- The pressure created by the media and through ICTs may lead to conflicts in the sense that decision-makers will have limited time to respond to developments.
- A dilemma between international broadcasting and the need for public intervention in certain cases.
- A new “visual intelligence” emerging at the expense of “verbal intelligence”, as a result of the supremacy of pictures over written texts; dominance of “easily digestible” items. E.g. a “cut & paste” student culture, amounting to plagiarism, emerging at schools and universities. Ironically, computer literacy is at the expense of linguistic literacy and academic proficiency.
- The use of ICTs by less than benevolent actors is a cause for concern. Cases of manipulative/fraudulent use of ICTs, e.g. through the unauthorised use of personal data. Implications of ICT applications for “privacy”; yet, the fundamental question is about the institutions handling sensitive information. “There can be no science without morality”, to quote Gandhi.
- Infringements on the freedom of expression. In cases of slander, codes of conduct should be a lot more meaningful, as slander through the ICTs can be extremely damaging. E.g. Negative publicity is difficult to be compensated with positive publicity. Psychological harm can be worse than physical harm - “what’s in a word?”. Everyone seems to be in favour of the freedom of expression, though what is a lot more controversial is the issue of self-restraint in exercising this freedom.
- The cost of ICT infrastructure – still prohibitive in many developing countries. Furthermore, linguistic limitations, restricting access to content, to be taken into account.

5. Challenges ahead

1. Some of the arguments spelled out nowadays are similar to the arguments a century ago when broadcasting started (if not six centuries ago, when books became printed). The Internet started out as a military medium, was then taken on by the scientific community and then became a wide-spread civilian asset. One should not blame the medium; “What kind of society do we want?” may be a more meaningful question to raise rather than point fingers at ICT developments. The Internet is a tool, which is not dangerous in itself; dangers come

from the people using the Internet. It is a question of ethics and it is up to users to decide on the use and limitations of ICTs.

2. Lowering the cost of ICT infrastructure may not be achieved soon, but businesses and CSOs can be involved in the process: providing relevant services on a community basis, fund-raising, etc. Cross-sectoral co-operation is very important, with the engagement of the business sector and civil society. One has to look at the benefits brought about by the ICTs, but also at the policies for their promotion - Scandinavian countries may very well be a case in point.

3. Access to ICTs is an economic issue, a matter of lowering the cost or making the necessary resources available. The cost of ICT infrastructure will come down, which is a natural development; content (and its spread) is the big issue, not the infrastructure. Furthermore, misuse of ICTs (fraud, poor exercise of the freedom of expression) is a political issue, a matter of setting the limits right.

4. Knowledge and capacity will be increasingly necessary for the selection of content and processing of information. 95% of our knowledge is based on other people's experience, not our own. Therefore, mankind should go down the ICT road, despite all the hazards and disadvantages. What is needed, therefore, is further debate, exchange of experience, etc.

5. Currently, EU member states have the best-educated youth they have ever had, with regard to access to education. Yet, Europe also has the highest levels of youth unemployment. If young people are less proficient, perhaps one should look at the patterns of education. What is also essential is participation – this is what is at stake for the youth.

6. As regards e-democracy, one has to be cautious about the applications of these technologies in cases where voters may not be sufficiently informed. Another important issue with e-democracy is confidentiality: once this is properly addressed, e-democracy will be boosted significantly. What is also at stake is not just access to a service, but also participation in the decision-making process.

II. The role of culture

1. Culture should be viewed as a set of values of individuals and nations, and as a vehicle for co-operation. Acceptance of different cultures is crucial, as it leads to tolerance. "Co-existence of civilisations" as a response to the "clash of civilisations" – sensitivities should be respected, precisely because psychological damage is so hard to measure. At the same, unease about the penetration of cultures, leading to rising nationalism? One may be exposed to and appreciate other values, but sharing those values is a different matter.

2. Culture has been neglected so far. Political and economic aspects have been duly prioritised, but unless culture is equally prioritised, progress and co-operation will be significantly inhibited.

3. There are many examples of "pop culture" products bringing nations closer to each other. The success of South Korean TV dramas (e.g. "Winter Sonata") is a case in point. The popularity of European football in Asia cannot be overstated. It is worth noting that

electronic games are a huge market (60% of animation products worldwide are made in Japan).

4. Through P2P (Peer to Peer) channels, everyone can create and then interact with others on a global scale. It is indicative that these channels of communication are particularly popular with the youth (chats, blogs, mobiles, etc.).

III. Recommendations

ASEM was established predominantly as an intergovernmental process. If, however, the desire is to keep civil society engaged in this process, government commitment will be needed for the provision of necessary resources and infrastructure.

1. Digital libraries

- Due to limited access to Asian bibliography, making more texts available in at least the major European languages (e.g. English, French and German) would be a priority, despite the high translation cost. Therefore, a Eurasian encyclopedia project could be considered on the basis of the Wikipedia model. This project could be run by CSOs, based on a set of rules (including an internal dispute-settling mechanism).
- An alternative could well be a digital catalogue of European and Asian bibliography; it is merely a question of bringing together existing digital libraries.
- Archive Centres and museums could also be linked digitally.
- A network of community radio stations could also be considered.
- Websites providing technical expertise to CSOs regarding project implementation, e.g. on film-production. This could be considered for the promotion of Asia-Europe co-operation.

2. Research and education

- Maximising existing facilities and resources, e.g. the ASEF 'DEEP' platform (Database on Educational Exchange Programme) under People-To-People Exchange, with practical information useful to students interested in studying abroad.
- Promotion of EU facilities, e.g. the Erasmus programme for student and researcher mobility.
- Extensive use of a recently launched EU-China portal on youth issues, which could be included in the ASEM process.
- Making the best of on-going EU-backed joint projects in tele-surgical training, e-learning, disaster warning, climate modeling, etc.
- Trans-Eurasia Information Network (TEIN2), linking some 60m users and providing the first large-scale communication network in Asia. That could be included in the ASEM context as a "success story" and as a precedent.

- Promotion of Asian and European studies, university courses (through the EC Delegations).
- Creating a website linked to universities and research institutes in Europe and Asia.

3. Cross-cultural exchange

- Stressing the cultural identity of Europe as different from that of the US. Europe is part of the West, but it is not the entire West.
- Taking into account most recent enlargement of the EU, the new member states could share their experience acquired in the area of profound socio-economic reforms and democratisation.
- Awareness-raising, through concerted action of CSOs, upon identification of commonalities and areas of common interest.
- Making the best of and following up on existing ASEF initiatives (e.g. the “Asia-Europe classroom” project – co-operation between secondary schools). Maximising the effects of what has already been implemented.
- Encourage on-line newspapers (e.g. *Asia Times*) and consider the production of a digest of Asian newspapers.
- Some form of syndicated Asian and European newspapers exchanging articles. There are some networks already that could be integrated (e.g. the Asia News network supported by the Konrad Adenauer Foundation). The same is true of radio and TV stations.
- Developing a community radio network between Asia and Europe.
- More active exchange of popular culture products (e.g. films) between Asia and Europe.
- Close contacts between media and content producers (e.g. ABU and EBU) within active networks.
- A need to make the best of existing advanced ICTs (e.g. satellite infrastructure) through the promotion of ASEM content, programme production, etc.
- At the same time, cultural diversity should also be preserved.

4. Follow-up on the Helsinki workshop

1. The workshop has set up four working groups on specific areas, whose task will be to identify one possible ASEM project each by the beginning of November. The working groups will cover the following areas:

- Pop culture (Jo Gröbel / Hideko Katsumata);
- Media (Yusuf Wanandi / Klaus Fritsche);
- Research and education and digital libraries (Hans Köchler / Surat Horachaikul);
- Unity in Diversity (Ilze Brands Kehris / Yeo Lay Hwee).

2. At the same time, one should not lose sight of the new Strategy for Asia 2007-2013 which is currently being drafted, and a number of recommendations that could be made to the European Commission.

3. Lobby eminent personalities in ASEM member states (including popular figures, like pop stars).

ANNEX 1: CONFERENCE AGENDA

Day 0 – Wednesday 6 September

ARRIVAL OF PARTICIPANTS, REGISTRATION AND WELCOME RECEPTION

	Arrival of Participants
16:30 - 18:30	Registration of Participants
19:00 - 21:00	Informal Welcome Dinner

Venue: Ravintola Kaarre, Kaivokatu 3

Day 1 – Thursday 7 September

Venue: The Parliament of Finland, Mannerheimintie 30

08:30 - 09:00	Registration of Participants (continued) at the Parliament Building
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OPENING SESSION

Venue: Auditorium

The session will focus on the evolution and prospects of ASEM.

09:00 - 09:30 WELCOME REMARKS BY THE CHAIRS

HE Esko Hamilo, Finland
Ambassador Asia, Ministry for Foreign Affairs (10 min)

HE Won-il Cho, Korea
Executive Director, Asia-Europe Foundation (10 min)

Mr Antti Kaikkonen, Finland
Member of the Parliament (10 min)

9:30 - 10:00 ASEM IN ITS TENTH YEAR – LOOKING BACK, LOOKING FORWARD

Presentation of the research report by the Japan Center for International Exchange and the University of Helsinki

Chair:

Dr Sebastian Bersick, Germany
Senior Research Fellow, European Institute for Asian Studies

Speakers:

Dr Yeo Lay Hwee, Singapore
Co-director, ASEM 10 Review Project Asian Research Team (15 min)

Dr Timo Kivimäki, Finland
Senior Researcher, Nordic Institute for Asian Studies (15 min)

10:00 - 10:30 **Question & Answer Session**

10:30 - 10:45 Coffee/Tea Break

10:45 - 11:45 FOUR COMMENTATORS ON THE STATE AND FUTURE OF ASEM

Chair:

Prof Wim Stokhof, the Netherlands
Director, International Institute for Asian Studies

Speakers:

Asia-Europe Peoples Forum representative:
Mr Charles Santiago, Malaysia
Political Economist, Monitoring Sustainable Globalisation (15 min)

Asia-Europe Business Forum representative:
Prof Jaques Gravereau, France
President, HEC Euroasia Institute (15 min)

Youth representative:
Ms Catherine Pabalan, the Philippines
President, ASEF University Alumni Network (15 min)

Academic representative:
Prof Martin Holland, UK
Research Director, National Centre for Research on Europe (15 min)

11:45 - 12:15 **Question & Answer Session**

12:15 - 13:15 Buffet Lunch

Venue: Delegation Reception Room

WORKSHOP SESSIONS

The two workshop sessions will be held simultaneously.

13:15 - 15:15 WS1: HOW CAN ASIA AND EUROPE CONTRIBUTE TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND ENERGY SECURITY?

Venue WS1: Cabinet 1

- Competition or cooperation – what are the joint interests for Asia and Europe in the field of energy?
- The role and importance of the Asia-Europe partnership in contributing to global efforts in addressing climate change, in particular the support for the post-Kyoto climate regime under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change
- Energy security and its implications for Asia and Europe
- Can governments, business and additional civil society stake-holders find common ground in a workable business model for renewable energy markets?

Moderators:

Dr David Stanners, UK

Head for International co-operation, European Environment Agency

Prof Akio Morishima, Japan

Chair of the Board of Directors

Institute for Global Environmental Strategies

Speakers:

Dr Philippe Bergeron, France-Germany

(15 min)

Senior Advisor, Regional Institute of Environmental Technology

Prof Pan Jiahua, China

Executive Director, Research Centre for Sustainable Development

Chinese Academy of Social Sciences

(15 min)

Open Discussions

(90 min)

Rapporteur:

Ms Ellamelides Antonio, the Philippines

Area Manager for Asia-Pacific, Earth Council

13:15 - 15:15

WS2: CAN ICT (INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY) BE SEEN AS THE NEW LINK FOR UNITY AND CULTURAL COMMUNICATION BETWEEN ASIA AND EUROPE?

Venue WS 2: Room A116

- How are the latest advances in ICT reflected in the fields of arts, media, economy and education?
- How can these developments be adapted in each sector to improve dialogue?
- ICT, accelerated by progress in science and technology, can lead to homogenisation of cultures in Asia and Europe. How can dialogue preserve cultural diversity?
- Through what existing or new framework could ASEM ensure the benefits of ICT to all societies in Asia and Europe?

Moderator:

Mr Jusuf Wanandi, Indonesia
Chairman, Supervisory Board, Centre for Strategic and International Studies and
President Director, Jakarta Post

Speakers:

Prof Dr Jo Groebel, Germany
Director-General, European Institute for the Media (15 min)

Ms Hideko Katsumata, Japan
Managing Director and Executive Secretary,
Japan Centre for International Exchange (15 min)

Open Discussions (90 min)

Rapporteur:

Mr Plamen Tonchev, Greece
Head of Asia Unit, Institute of International Economic Relations

15:15 - 15:45 Coffee/Tea Break

15:45 - 17:45 CONTINUATION: WORKSHOP SESSIONS AND OPEN DISCUSSIONS

17:45 - 19:00 Free Time

19:00 - 20:30 **Reception hosted by the City of Helsinki**

Venue: Vanha Raatihuone Aleksanterinkatu 20

Day 2 – Friday 8 September

Venues: The Parliament of Finland and the Annex of the Parliament

WORKSHOP SESSIONS: ACTION PLAN FOR COOPERATION

Venue: The Parliament of Finland, Mannerheimintie 30

09:00 - 11:45 **Continuation of Discussions & Elaboration of Recommendations**

After having discussed thematic areas that need action and having identified challenges/solutions for inter-sectoral co-operation within civil society, participants will identify specific thematic areas of common ground for possible co-operation:

- What specific projects could participating representatives of the business sector and other sectors of civil society work on from the time of the meeting in Helsinki until the next ASEM Summit in two years?
- Which resources and networks would help facilitate partnerships among the stakeholders represented?
- What joint recommendations can be made to the leaders of the ASEM process?

WS1: HOW CAN ASIA AND EUROPE CONTRIBUTE TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND ENERGY SECURITY?

Venue WS1: Cabinet 1

WS2: CAN ICT (INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY) BE SEEN AS THE NEW LINK FOR UNITY AND CULTURAL COMMUNICATION BETWEEN ASIA AND EUROPE?

Venue WS 2: Room A116

11:45 - 12:30 Lunch Venue: Delegation Reception Room
12:30 - 12:45 Change of Venue and Group Picture

Plenary and Concluding Sessions

The plenary and concluding sessions will be open to invited participants of the ASEF Editors' Roundtable and to ASEM officials, as well as other civil society representatives.

Venue: The Annex of the Parliament, Auditorium, Arkadiankatu 3

PLENARY SESSION

12:45 - 14:00 **Presentation of key outcomes of workshop sessions**

The assigned workshop rapporteurs will report the key outcomes of their workshops:

Chair:

Mr Bertrand Fort, France
Deputy Executive Director, Asia-Europe Foundation

Rapporteurs:

WS 1: Ms Ellamelides Antonio, the Philippines
Area Manager for Asia-Pacific, Earth Council (15 min)

WS 2: Mr Plamen Tonchev, Greece (15 min)
Head of Asia Unit, Institute of International Economic Relations

Open Discussion

(45 min)

14:00 - 14:30

CLOSING REMARKS FROM THE ORGANISERS

Dr Paul van der Velde, the Netherlands
Senior Consultant, International Institute for Asian Studies

Ms Hideko Katsumata, Japan
Managing Director & Executive Secretary
Japan Center for International Exchange

Dr Sebastian Bersick, Germany
Senior Research Fellow, European Institute for Asian Studies

Ms Kaarina Suonio, Finland
Vice Chairman of the Board of Governors and Governor for Finland
Asia-Europe Foundation

Representative, Finland
Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Republic of Finland

14:30 - 14:45

Coffee/Tea Break

CONCLUDING SESSION

14:45 - 16:15

KEYNOTE ADDRESSES

Chair:

HE Erkki Tuomioja, Finland
Minister for Foreign Affairs, Republic of Finland

Keynote Speaker:

HE Ki-Moon Ban, Korea
Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Republic of Korea (30 min)

Question & Answer Session (15 min)

HE Martti Ahtisaari, Finland
Former President, Republic of Finland (30 min)

Question & Answer Session (15 min)

16:15 - 16:45

PRESS CONFERENCE

Venue: The Annex of the Parliament, Auditorium

16:00 - 17:00

RECEPTION HOSTED BY THE FINNISH PARLIAMENT TO END OFFICIAL PROGRAMME

Venue: The Annex of the Parliament

Day 3 – Saturday 9 September

**DEPARTURE OF PARTICIPANTS/
RECEPTION FOR IN HELSINKI REMAINING PARTICIPANTS**

Evening

Reception by the Finnish Prime Minister

Venue: Wanha Satama, Pikku Satamakatu 3-5
The participants are to organise their own transportation to the venue.

ANNEX 2: PARTICIPANTS' DETAILS

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ANNEX 3: CONFERENCE CO-ORGANISERS

Asia-Europe Foundation

The Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF) seeks to promote better mutual understanding between Asia and Europe through greater intellectual, cultural and people-to-people exchanges. ASEF was established by 10 Asian nations, the 15 member states of the European Union and the European Commission on 15 February 1997. The foundation is based in Singapore and reports to a Board of Governors, appointed by the 38 ASEM member states and the European Commission. To promote exchanges in the three areas – intellectual, cultural and people-to-people – ASEF organises conventions, symposia, seminars, public lectures, youth camps, art competitions, performances, exhibitions, and others. ASEF has completed over 400 projects involving more than 8,000 participants in the past nine years of promoting multilateral relations.

For more information: www.asef.org



Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Finland

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs promotes the security and welfare of Finland and the Finns, and works for a secure and fair world. The core responsibilities of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs are related to foreign and security policy, significant foreign policy issues and international relations in general. In this capacity, the Ministry also assists other branches of government in the coordination of international affairs. The Finnish Foreign Service - the Ministry and approximately one hundred diplomatic and consular missions - focuses to serve the Finns, the Finnish economy and society at large, the country's political leadership and Parliament. Finland's welfare is increasingly based on knowledge, creativity and innovation. The relatively small domestic market offers limited possibilities for success. It is therefore of the utmost importance to work more effectively at an international level. Finns also travel more than ever for both business and pleasure. This creates growing challenges for Finnish diplomatic and consular missions abroad.

For more information: <http://formin.finland.fi>



International Institute for Asian Studies

The International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS) is a postdoctoral research centre based in Leiden and Amsterdam, the Netherlands. Our main objective is to encourage the interdisciplinary and comparative study of Asia and to promote national and international cooperation in the field. The institute focuses on the humanities and social sciences and on their interaction with other sciences. IIAS acts as an international mediator, bringing various parties together. In keeping with the Dutch tradition of transferring goods and ideas, IIAS works as a clearinghouse for knowledge and information. Our activities include



providing information services, setting up international networks, cooperative projects and research programmes. In this way, IIAS functions as a window on Europe for non-European scholars and contributes to the cultural rapprochement between Asia and Europe.

The IIAS has been involved in the ASEM process since its inception and has published four edited volumes on this topic. It's our pleasure to offer all participants our latest publication entitled *Multiregionalism and Multilateralism: Asian-European Relations in a Global Context* (Amsterdam University Press, 2006) free of charge.

For more information: www.iias.nl, see also our ARP website at www.iias.nl/asem

European Institute for Asian Studies



The European Institute for Asian Studies (EIAS) is a Brussels-based policy and research think-tank supported by the European Union (EU) which aims to promote understanding and cooperation between the EU and Asia. It does so through working closely together with the European Union institutions in Brussels, as well as with research centres across Asia and within the Europe Union. EIAS seeks to provide information and expertise to the European Union institutions, the academic world and business by disseminating concise, thoroughly researched and up-to-date material on EU-Asia relations and important developments in Asia. EIAS activities include undertaking research studies, organising briefings, seminars and conferences, and in-house publishing of research through EIAS Briefing Papers and the *EurAsia Bulletin*.

EIAS is also very active participant in Europe-Asia networks of research and analysis as well as supporting its own Internet site on EU-Asia.

For more information: www.eias.org

Japan Centre for International Exchange



Japan Center for International Exchange (JCIE) founded in 1970, is an independent, non-profit, and non-partisan organisation dedicated to strengthening Japan's role in international networks of policy dialogue and co-operation. JCIE has played an important role in broadening debate on Japan's international responsibilities by conducting international and cross-sectoral programs of research, exchange and dialogue. JCIE creates opportunities for informed policy discussions; it does not take policy positions. JCIE programs are carried out with the collaboration and co-sponsorship of many organisations. JCIE's activities are organised into three interrelated and mutually reinforcing programs: Global ThinkNet, CivilNet, and the Political Exchange Program.

For more information: www.jcie.or.jp