ASEF Presents Report to ASEM Foreign Ministers in Berlin

Two years ago on 15 February 1997, ASEM Foreign Ministers launched the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF) in Singapore. On 29 March 1999, at the ASEM Foreign Ministers Meeting in Berlin, ASEF Executive Director Tommy Koh, accompanied by the Deputy Executive Director Pierre Barroux, presented a report on the achievements of the Foundation since its birth.

He highlighted projects from its intellectual, people-to-people and cultural exchange programmes. He summed up the report saying "In our first two years, we have implemented 26 projects, in 13 different ASEM countries, with a total budget of about US$4 million. By the end of this year, we will have held events in 18 of the 25 ASEM countries. It is our ambition to hold ASEF projects in all 25 countries so as to give each ASEM member a sense of co-ownership of the Foundation."

"The task of the Foundation, to enhance better mutual understanding between the peoples of Asia and Europe, is both important and formidable. It is a task that will take generations to accomplish. But even a journey of a thousand miles must begin with the first step. I hope that we have started in the right direction and have already covered several miles in that long journey."

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The first Asia-Europe Experts Meeting, sponsored by ASEF, the Vietnam Ministry of Culture and Information and the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs was held in Hanoi, Vietnam on 21 – 22 January 1999.

Sixty-two cultural heritage officials and experts from the ASEF family adopted an action plan of twelve project proposals in three major areas of protection and promotion of cultural heritage, namely information exchange and public education, professional training and legal studies. The meeting also created a Steering Committee to supervise the implementation of the Action Plan. The first meeting of the Steering Committee is scheduled for October 1999. For more information, please contact Mr Cai Rongsheng at rscai@asef.org. Above: Johansson Bengt (Sweden) and Niamol Musigikama (Thailand).

The EMU Roadshow is the Foundation’s on-going occasional series to interpret this major development in the European Economic and Monetary Policy for specialist Asian audiences. The first “stop” was in Hong Kong in July 1998. We were delighted to organise the second in Singapore in March this year.

Our guest and distinguished speaker was Mr Christian Noyer, Vice-President of the European Central Bank, who spoke on “The Euro’s Impact on Asia and the World” to a large audience of some 470 people from the government, banking, finance, media and academic worlds. Succinct and cogent comments on Mr Noyer’s speech was provided by Mr Ng Kee Choe (President of the Association of Banks in Singapore) and Ms Yeo Lian Sim (Assistant Managing Director of the Monetary Authority of Singapore). Their remarks initiated a lively question and answer session.

This event was co-organised with the Association of Banks in Singapore, the Singapore International Monetary Exchange and the Stock Exchange of Singapore, to whom we extend grateful thanks. For more information, please contact Mr Duncan Jackman at dhjackman@asef.org. Left: Christian Noyer.

The Asian Film Festival in Deauville was organised by the Association for Promotion of Asian Films, with the sponsorship of ASEF.

This festival, held from 5 – 7 March, aimed to promote the appreciation of Asian films and to set up a platform to facilitate the distribution of Asian films in Europe. Films presented included “Xiu Xiu” by Joan Chen (China) and “Leaf on a Pillow” by Garin Nugroho (Indonesia). For more information, please contact Mr Cai Rongsheng at rscai@asef.org.
Seventy experts from ASEM countries participated in this seminar organised by the Vietnamese Ministries of Health and of Foreign Affairs, and supported by ASEF, UNICEF and WHO.

Initiated by the Vietnam Government at the first ASEM meeting in Bangkok, the meeting adopted follow-up proposals to strengthen cooperation between Asia and Europe on exchange of information, training programme and legal studies related to the combination of traditional and modern medicine. For more information, please contact Mr Cai Rongsheng at rscai@asef.org.

This one-week training seminar was designed for cultural managers from the 25 ASEM countries involved in arts and heritage management.

Besides management training, "Cultural Insight Asia-Europe" also focused on policy, research, economics, cultural awareness and cultural practice. The seminar stimulated the exchange of experiences and the creation of a network for participants. 12 distinguished speakers addressed the 60 participants. For more information, please contact Mr Cai Rongsheng at rscai@asef.org.

The Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF) co-organised the Exhibition of Videos and Photos with the House of World Cultures from 30 March – 11 April 1999, alongside the ASEM Foreign Ministers Meeting in Berlin on 29 March.

The exhibits were compiled by high school students from ASEM countries participating in the Asia-Europe Classroom (AEC) – a classroom in cyberspace created by ASEF – which can be found at www.asef.org/aec.

Entitled “Your Way from Home to School”, the exhibition featured submissions by schools from 22 countries including Brunei, Italy, Korea, Luxembourg, Philippines, Singapore and Sweden.

Students from six countries were also present in Berlin to personally explain their exhibits to guests who attended the exhibition opening, including German State Minister Dr Ludger Volmer, HRH Princess Hajah Masna from Brunei and HE Domingo L Siazon Jr from Philippines. For more information about the exhibition, please contact Mr Ulrich Niemann at uniemann@asef.org.

Above left: Lee Moon Hee (Korea).
Above right: VIPs from Vietnam, Brunei and Philippines.
May

12 – 14 May
Jakarta, Indonesia
Organised by ASEF in association with the British Council

19 – 21 May
Beijing, China
Asia-Europe Conference on Cultural Industries and Cultural Development
Co-organised by ASEF and the Ministry of Culture of China

24 – 28 May
Seoul, Korea
Third Asia-Europe Young Leaders Symposium
Organised by the Korean Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, with the support of ASEF

Jun–Sept

7 – 9 June
Wilton Park, United Kingdom
Europe and Asia: A New Vision for the Partnership
Organised by ASEF in association with Wilton Park Conference Centre

28 – 29 June
Beijing, China
2nd Informal ASEM Seminar on Human Rights

5 – 6 July
Joensuu, Finland
Workshop on Sustainable Forest Management & Experts Exchange

5 – 7 July
Brussels, Belgium
Conference on Trade Issues

22 August – 5 September
Beijing, China
Second ASEF Summer School
Co-organised by ASEF and Peking University

An ASEF Colloquium for Journalists: A Preview of the Indonesian Elections. The June 7 Indonesian elections is viewed by both continents as a historical event in Asia. In “A Preview of the Indonesian Elections”, ASEF aims to bring together Asian and European journalists to better understand the dynamics and complexities of the June 7 elections. The three sessions of the Colloquium are designed to provide an overview of the political landscape of Indonesia today, insights into the current political state of play, and different possible future scenarios resulting from the elections. For more information, please contact Ms Peggy Kek at peggykek@asef.org.

ASEF Summer School 1999 will take place at Peking University, China from 22 August – 5 September. Co-organised by ASEF and the Center for Overseas Exchange, Peking University, it will provide 35 undergraduates from Asia and Europe with tools to help understand and appreciate the other region and its cultures. The ASEF Summer Schools help establish a network among future intellectual elites. For more information, please contact Mr Ulrich Niemann at uniemann@asef.org.

Extra!!
Indonesian Election

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Edited by Peggy Kek
Proofread by Kuan Soo Phen