The first steps taken by the new ASEF Management team were explicitly geared towards advancing the Foundation from its successful launch phase of four years to the next phase of consolidating it.

Executive Director Ambassador Delfín Colomé, and Deputy Executive Director Kim Sung-Chul visited all 25 ASEF partner countries and European Commission to meet government officials, institutions, and other related individuals already engaged or interested in ASEF programs, and had extensive discussions on the future of ASEF. After more than 500 different contacts and a special roundtable held in Singapore, two main agenda stood out as imminent.

The first was related to the improvement of ASEF administration to guarantee a better management of the financial resources and to accord adequate transparency. A large set of practical measures was immediately adopted, especially concerning salaries, travel policy, and the presentation of budget proposals among others.

The second agenda, unanimously stressed by the partners, was the need for ASEF to better focus and concentrate on a definite number of programs, in accordance with a list of priorities to be pre-defined.

The Board of Governors, during its ninth biannual meeting (Lisbon, 10-11 May 2001), discussed and endorsed the future strategy presented by the Management, thus allowing the Management to start taking concrete actions to execute its mandate.

The strategy, which particularly emphasises youth, education, and information technology, was also endorsed by ASEM Foreign Ministers in Beijing on 24-25 May. The Ministers went on to express support for a new round of contributions to ASEF’s budget by partners in time for ASEM IV in Copenhagen.

The Management will do its utmost to successfully follow the upward trajectory envisaged by all loyal friends of ASEF.

Delfín Colomé
Executive Director
Finnish Secretary of State, Jukka Valtasaari, who is also a recognised expert on European security matters, visited ASEF, and spoke of European Security at the Beginning of the 21st Century: Recent Developments in the Common European Security and Defence Policy.

Valtasari's remarks concentrated on how security issues are seen in Europe, what is being done in the European Union regarding security and defence matters, and what this means in practice for the EU's role globally. He also touched upon the topic of Russia, which is an essential element in European security. His concluding remarks addressed how confidence building was approached in the divided and tense atmosphere of Europe in the 1960s and 1970s. The presentation was followed by a lively discussion among the audience, which consisted of diplomatic representatives of ASEM member states, heads of think tanks, and members of ASEF and SIIA.

The roundtable discussion was co-organised by ASEF and the Singapore Institute of International Affairs (SIIA).

ASEF sponsor-organises Asia-Europe Documentary Festival as part of the 14th Singapore International Film Festival

The Asia-Europe Documentary Film Festival was aimed at promoting documentaries as a real medium and providing a platform for future cooperation among documentary producers from Europe and Asia.

The Documentary Festival featured films from Belgium, China, Denmark, France, Germany, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, the Netherlands, Spain, United Kingdom and Vietnam.

In addition to these screenings, was organised an Asia-Europe Panel Discussion: The Truth is Still Out There on documentary filmmaking. Filmmakers from the two regions convened in Singapore to address some of the cultural barriers that may pose as problems when it comes to finding the funds, the audience, and the suitable subjects for documentary films.
ASEF co-organises an informal dialogue, *New Visions and Perspectives for Women and Men*, as its first-ever project on gender issues.

The Dialogue focusing on various social, economic, and political implications arising from gender differences drew some 65 participants from 20 ASEM member partners. Conceived and made possible by members of the Steering Committee consisting of gender experts, four main topics addressed and discussed were:

- Challenges for Women and Men in a Changing Environment;
- Human Dimension in the Economy: Engendering the Budget;
- Human Dimension in the Economy: Market and Trade Policies; and
- Transformational Approach to Political Decision-Making.

These presentations were followed by workshop sessions where the participants broke up into three working groups to discuss and debate at length the issues previously raised by the experts.

The participants came from a variety of diverse backgrounds from academia to the business, political, media and the non-governmental sectors. They represented a wide range of views and opinions that helped to contribute to the lively debates during the workshop and plenary sessions.

The conference was jointly co-organised by ASEF and the Japan Centre for International Exchange, with the support of the Japanese and European Commission Trust Funds.

For more information on this project, please contact Arnaud d'Andurain at andurain@asef.org
This project, borne out of an ASEM 3 initiative, was organised by the Korean Institute of Foreign Affairs & National Security (IFANS) in partnership with ASEF. The Roundtable brought together 70 participants and observers from 20 ASEM countries. Participants included scholars, government officials and non-government organisations.

The main themes discussed were:

- Globalisation and regional responses
- Political and cultural aspects of globalisation
- Economic and social aspects of globalisation
- Globalisation and the ASEM process

The discussions generated a forthright and dynamic exchange of views, resulting in a new network of Asians and Europeans interested in the area of globalisation. Furthermore, it encouraged the Asian and European participants to embark on a common search for solutions to some of the often controversial areas connected to globalisation among Asian and European countries.

ASEF takes part in the 5th Shanghai International Film Festival (SIFF) by co-organising Asia-Europe Film Focus with the SIFF Committee.

About 100 films from 22 ASEM countries were screened during the festival, which was aimed to raise public awareness towards Asia-Europe cinematography and creativity. Participants included scholars, government officials, and non-government organisations.

The Asia-Europe Film Focus represented one third of the total number of movies and half of the countries present during the festival. Approximately 170,000 people attended the screenings of the Asia-Europe Film Focus, indicating the high level of interest in films from these two regions.

Among the members of the international jury panel, five out of seven were from ASEM member countries: Zhu Yongde (China), Pan Hong (China), Eberhard Junkersdorf (Germany), Lee Chang-Dong (Korea) and Alan Parker (U.K).

For further information on the Festival, please write to Cai Rongsheng, Director, Cultural Exchange: rscai@asef.org
Chief Economist of Deutsche Bank Group, Professor Norbert Walter suggests that an Asian Monetary Union might be feasible in as early as 2020

At an ASEF lecture, before an audience made up of invited guests from various economic and financial organisations and diplomatic corps represented in Singapore, Professor Walter spoke regarding the concept of an Asian Monetary Union.

Highlighting the need for a reduced dependence on the US dollar, and an increase of economic strength and stability in the region, he noted that the conditions in Asia were increasingly similar to the conditions leading up to the formation of the European Monetary Union. However, Professor Walter emphasised the necessity for infrastructural institutions and frameworks to be put in place before such a concept could be further developed.

Twenty-eight outstanding undergraduates from 24 ASEM member countries convene for two-weeks of intellectual and cultural interaction at the historic Convento da Arrábida in Portugal.

The students, mostly in their final year at their respective universities, and coming from the fields of social and political sciences, economics, international law, geography and history, underwent an intensive programme of lectures and panel discussions focusing on the economic, social, political, ethnic and cultural conflicts in the modern world, as well as on different models of regional and bi-regional co-operation and integration (i.e., ASEM, EU and ASEAN) that aim to overcome these conflicts. Fittingly, the theme of the Fifth ASEF University was entitled, Integration or Disintegration of the Modern World: Experiences in Europe and Asia. The lecturers and panelists consisted of academics from universities and research institutes, as well as practitioners from governments, international organisations, and other groups from within civil societies.

The Fifth ASEF University gave a taste of Portugal’s colourful culture and glorious past. The cultural programme included tours in Lisbon, a day trip to the World Heritage City of Evora and a full-day tour around the region of Arrábida. The participants also experienced a unique evening concert at a Fado Traditional Music House, and were privy to a performance by Yutaro Nagao, an up-and-coming flamenco guitar musician of Japanese descent.

The Fifth ASEF University, held from 22 July to 4 August 2001, was co-organised by ASEF and the Fundação Oriente, and supported by the Universidade Aberta.

For more information on the ASEF Universities, please visit our website at http://www.asef.org/asef-uni or e-mail Cathy Pabalan at cathy@asef.org
ASEF Celebrates Fourth Anniversary
12 March Singapore

Four years ago, the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF) was officially launched by the 25 ASEM countries and the European Commission, at a ceremony which coincided with the first meeting of the ASEM Foreign Ministers in Singapore. This year, ASEF celebrates its fourth anniversary.

The last four years have been very successful ones for ASEF, as recognised by leaders of ASEM countries in the 3rd ASEM held last October in Seoul. As part of its anniversary celebrations, ASEF held a forum on ASEF Future Strategies and an anniversary luncheon on its premises.

The Forum on ASEF’s Future Strategies aimed to stimulate discussion on topics such as: What is the vision of ASEF? What strategies should be adopted to fulfil this vision? Which areas should ASEF focus on? Who are the people ASEF should reach out to?

Attended by 26 participants made up of representatives from think tanks, governments, international organisations, and academia, the Forum offered a diverse range of new ideas to further enhance relations between the civil societies of Asia and Europe.

An Anniversary luncheon was held after the Forum. Invited guests included government officials, and members of international organisations and the academic community. ASEF Executive Director, Ambassador Delfin Colomé and Chairman of the Board of Governors, Ambassador Joo Hee Oh addressed the guests.