Ten years of ASEM
1996 - 2006

The ASEM 6 Summit was held in Helsinki on 10 and 11 September 2006. It constituted a historically significant event as it marked the tenth anniversary of the ASEM co-operation forum. It was also the largest ever meeting at the level of Heads of State or Government hosted by Finland.

The event gathered 38 leaders of Asian and European countries and the President of the European Commission. Together, they established clear guidelines for the future of the Asia-Europe co-operation process. The overarching theme of the Summit was “10 Years of ASEM: Global Challenges – Joint Responses”. Two declarations were adopted: “The Declaration on Climate Change” that aims to reinforce the efforts to address global climate change, and “The Helsinki Declaration” that presents guidelines and practical recommendations for developing co-operation in the future. A decision on the admission of six new partners was also agreed: Bulgaria and Romania from Europe and India, Mongolia, Pakistan and the ASEAN Secretariat on the Asian side will join the ASEM process. Please visit the ASEF Infoboard website at www.aseminfoboard.org to read or download these important documents as well as the Summit Chairman’s Statement.

In its efforts to complement and closely align to the priorities underlined by the ASEM Leaders, ASEF implemented projects in support of the ASEM Summit, namely: ASEM 6 Cultural Event: The Year of Asian Cultures, Asia-Europe Art Camp: Hearing Helsinki, Borderless Me!, ASEM@10: Connecting Civil Societies of Asia and Europe, and Third Asia-Europe Editors’ Roundtable. Additionally, ASEF also set up an Information Booth in the main corridor of Helsinki Fair Center where the Summit took place, as a one-stop information source for participants who would like to know more about ASEF and its contribution to ASEM process. The following pages contain details of these activities.

1 Focus: Ten Years of ASEM (1996-2006)
2 Photos Collage of: The Year of Asian Culture, Asia-Europe Art Camp, ASEM@10 — Connecting Civil Society of Asia and Europe, 3rd Asia-Europe Editors’ Roundtable, Borderless Me, ASEF Infobooth, and Youth in Helsinki
3 ASEF Projects and Activities to Commemorate Ten Years of ASEM
4 ASEM 6 Cultural Event: The Year of Asian Cultures
5 4th Asia-Europe Art Camp: Hearing Helsinki
6 ASEF@10: Connecting Civil Societies of Asia and Europe
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16 New Publications
17 Call For Papers
18 Bulletin with special feature on: Peter Ryan / Jean Anes
19 Commentary by Marie Ruppel
20 Looking Ahead/ASEM Calendar
21 4th ASEF Journalists’ Colloquium: Managing Creative Liberties in a Multi-faith and Multi-cultural Context
22 9th Talks on the Hill: Pressing Freedoms – Advancing Interfaith Understanding and Co-operation through the Media
23 Looking Ahead: ASEM Youth Dialogue 2006
24 First Asia-Europe Youth Interfaith Dialogue
“This dialogue between Europe and Asia is also being conducted at the level of civil society. From the outset ASEM has acted as a catalyst, stimulating interaction between business communities, trade unions, NGOs, parliaments and other sectors of civil society in Asia and Europe, and providing them with a framework for discussing topical issues as diverse as human rights and health threats, environment and energy, commerce and intercultural dialogue, and so on. Over the last ten years, ASEM has thus become a multi-layered and multi-dimensional setting actively used by representatives of all walks of life in Asia and Europe”.

from EU President José Manuel Barroso’s speech at the opening ceremony of ASEM6 Summit, 10 September 2006

“To enhance the visibility of the ASEM process and develop a more participatory process, it is crucial that ASEM forge stronger ties with civil society. A meaningful, sustainable engagement of different civil society groups would enhance ASEM’s visibility and a feeling of ownership in the ASEM process. These efforts will help ensure that the general public are the biggest beneficiaries of the ASEM process.

In this regard, it should be noted that the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF) has successfully managed over three hundred projects in the field of intellectual, cultural and people-to-people exchanges. In light of the valuable contribution it is making, it would be desirable for ASEM partners to continue their support for ASEF. We look forward to it maintaining momentum as a driving force in ASEM’s third pillar.”

(UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon’s speech at the conference of ASEF@10, co-organised by ASEF and the Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 8 September 2006)
To date, more than 55,000 individuals have participated in the various events organised as part of The Year of Asian Cultures in Finland.

Consisting of exhibitions, performances, lectures and film screenings among other activities, The Year of Asian Cultures, implemented in cooperation with the curatorial team designated by the Ministry of Education of Finland, has offered its mainly European visitors a valuable insight into the diverse cultures of Asia.

New projects, such as the Exhibition of Asian Poetry in the centre of Helsinki during the ASEM Summit, have been added to the original plan. This is thanks to the great enthusiasm with which the whole project has been received by the cultural institutions in Finland. The events are distributed around the whole country with main events taking place in and around Helsinki (including Vantaa and Espoo) and in Tampere.

List of Events

- Asian Film Festival (2-21 May)
- Exhibition of Asian Shadow Puppets (13 February – 5 March)
- Puppet Theatre for Children (4-26 April)
- Dances from the Shores of Indian Ocean (3-13 May)
- Exhibition on Continuity and Change of Southeast Asian Textiles (18 May 2006 – 7 January 2007)
- Chamber Music Series: Traditional Chamber Music from Asia (1-3 September)
- Outdoor Exhibition of Asian poetry (4 September – 5 October)
- Series of Radio Programmes by the Finnish Broadcasting Company (YLE) (September-October)
- Series of Lectures and Small Exhibitions on Asian Literature (September-October)
- Japanese Contemporary Dance Performance at Festival of Contemporary Asian Dance (28 October – 4 November)
- Chinese Kunqu-opera performance

4th Asia-Europe Art Camp
Hearing Helsinki
12 – 20 June 2006
Helsinki (Finland)

It can be argued that the ‘audio’ in ‘audiovisual’ is often ignored or neglected. The 4th Asia-Europe Art Camp therefore aimed to study and explore the New Medium of Sound through the documentation of Helsinki City sounds and the utilisation of new mobile media technologies for the sharing of these experiences.

Twenty young artists in their final year of study from 19 ASEM countries were brought together for eight days for this intensive camp. Its objective was to expose the invited participants to other ways of approaching sound art, while providing them with the tools, contacts and information to expand their personal artistic boundaries and to foster new partnerships and collaborations.

Diverse presentations, by the students and by the four established new media art practitioners who served as lecturers, emphasised certain core concepts of the camp, namely, the subjectivity in the definition of “New Media” and “Sound Art”; the cultural specificities that shape the individual’s positioning of him/herself within the field of Sound Art; the vast range of possibilities that the sound medium has to offer; the different ways of relating to, working with and presenting sound; the prizing of understanding and sharing over agreement and the subjectivity of the individual human ear and brain when interpreting sound.

The students also spent time exploring Helsinki equipped with MD recorders, sound capture enabled mobile phones, microphones and other recording paraphernalia, to map and document the city’s sounds. They then spent the final portion of the camp editing the captured sounds and splicing them together to form sonic explorations or narratives of Helsinki City life.

Hearing Helsinki was co-organised and co-funded by Media Lab (Est. 1993) of the
The meeting was organised as follows:

- There was a panel on the state and future of ASEM, as seen from the perspectives of the Asia-Europe Peoples’ Forum (AEPF), the Asia-Europe Business Forum (AEBF), the youth (represented by the ASEF University Alumni Network) and academe. It was the first time that all these important stakeholders held discussions on a single platform addressing both policy issues as well as concrete cooperation within ASEM.

- The intervention from the academe was delivered by Prof. Martin Holland of University of Canterbury which focused on the results of an study supported by ASEF on how the European Union (EU) and ASEM are perceived in Asian media. This presentation was also the kick off of the 17th ASEF Lecture Tour which brought Prof. Holland to various cities in Europe (please refer to “Updates” section, article titled “The EU through the Eyes of Asia: A Comparative Study of Media Perceptions”)

- Two workshops on Energy Security and Information and Communication Technology (ICT). These also resulted in commitments by the participants to continue working together in four areas of cross-cultural communication and on the international climate change regime, in particular through the ASEF-led Asia-Europe Environment Forum.

- The meeting ended with keynote addresses by Mr. Ban Ki-moon (UN Secretary-General), and Mr. Martti Ahtisaari (former President of Finland). The session was chaired by Foreign Minister of Finland Mr. Erkki Tuomioja and opened to an audience of 200 from the Finnish public and various groups already in Helsinki for the ASEM 6 Summit.

This conference was co-organised by ASEF, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland, Japan Center for International Exchange, International Institute for Asian Studies (Netherlands) and European Institute for Asian Studies (Belgium).

For further information, please contact Ms. Natalia Figge at natalia@asef.org

This two-day conference brought together 60 top-calibre participants from non-government organisations (NGOs), business, academe, the youth sector, cultural and other institutions, the media and ASEM senior officials to review the first ten years of the ASEM process.
The Roundtable got off to a high-profile start as participants enjoyed an exclusive breakfast meeting hosted by Finnish Prime Minister Matti Vanhanen, together with President of the European Commission José Manuel Barroso. The chief editors used this opportunity to receive updates on Asia-Europe co-operation, and particularly Finland’s and the EU’s interests in pursuing relations through the ASEM process.

At the Roundtable’s morning session entitled, “Dialogue among cultures and civilisations – Need for socially responsible journalism?”, which was moderated by Tapani Ruokanen (Editor-in-Chief of Suomen Kuvalehti of Finland), the participants agreed that globalisation and the growth of multi-cultural societies had increased the responsibility of the media to share best practices in reporting sensitive subjects, both domestically and internationally. At the same time, there was a need for the media to find an appropriate balance between freedom of expression and due respect for cross-cultural differences.

The second session of the Roundtable, held in the afternoon, addressed the subject, “Shared responsibility in sustainable development and resource management – Promoting Asia-Europe Partnership”. In this session, moderated by Patrick Daniel (Managing Editor of Singapore Press Holdings), the participants emphasised that, given the severe challenges of global climate change, and the added stress coming from rapid mass industrialisation and urban development driven by fossil fuel consumption, short-term economic growth must not come at the expense of a further degradation of the environment and depletion of non-renewable resources.

“Leaders reaffirmed their support for the role played by the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF) in enhancing dialogue and cooperation between the peoples of Asia and Europe through intellectual, cultural, and people-to-people exchanges, underlining in particular the importance of involving the young and reaching out to civil society. They emphasised the importance of ASEF’s flagship programmes in further aligning ASEF activities with ASEM priorities and encouraged ASEF to pursue this orientation. Furthermore they stressed the need to optimise ASEF’s capacity in enhancing the visibility of ASEM. Leaders welcomed and endorsed the solution to secure ASEF’s long-term financial sustainability as prepared by the ASEF Senior Officials.”

from Chairman’s Statement of ASEM6 Summit, 11 September 2006

“"The meeting had provided for the frank exchange of opinions (that) will make our eyes a little more open, and eventually help us journalists contribute more for the development of mankind”

Yoshinori Imai, Executive Editor of NHK Japan, a participant in the 3rd Editor’s Roundtable.
The works of over 100 Asian and European artists were featured in Borderless Me!, a series of creative multimedia installations (photo + video + sound) reflecting the rich diversity of ASEM cultures, and employing new technologies for Asia-Europe cultural collaboration.

Showcased at the Helsinki Fair Centre throughout the ASEM official meetings, Borderless Me! was also shown at an outdoor venue in downtown Helsinki on the evenings of 7-8 September in order to widen access to and viewership of the presentation.

The installations, composed of artistic elements from several other ASEF's cultural projects, allowed the many Asian and European visitors to be transported to a common and borderless Asia-Europe visual and sound environment. It was also an interactive illustration of the ASEF's active involvement in civil society dialogue through its diverse projects. The ‘soundscape’ materials employed were the result of the 4th Asia-Europe Art Camp 2006, while the artistic input for the visual installation was provided by Berlin-based duo, Walkscreen.

More than 3,000 guests, comprising high-level government officials and media, visited Borderless Me! between the meetings at the ASEM 6 venue. Among them were EU President José Manuel Barroso and French President Jacques Chirac. Borderless Me! was organised with the aid of the Finnish EU Presidency, Media Lab of the University of Art and Design of Helsinki, and the City of Helsinki Cultural Office.

“At the trans-regional level, ASEM interlinks Europe’s and Asia’s business communities, parliaments, NGOs and other representatives of civil society. The Asia-Europe Foundation, the only institution of ASEM, has played a significant role in people-to-people contacts. The Foundation has successfully developed networking as well as cultural and educational exchanges, and has provided an interface between ASEM governments and civil society in the two regions.”

(from an article “Seeking joint responses to global challenges - Asia and Europe look to the future on ASEM’s tenth anniversary,” published in major daily newspapers ahead of ASEM6. Jointly issued by Mr. Matti Vanhanen, Prime Minister of Finland and President of the Council of the European Union, Mr. José Manuel Barroso, President of the European Commission, Mr. Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, President of the Republic of Indonesia, Mr. Roh Moo-hyun, President of the Republic of Korea - the Leaders of the four ASEM coordinators, namely the country holding the rotating EU Presidency, Finland, the European Commission, Indonesia representing ASEAN countries and Korea representing the Northeast Asian countries.)
Editor’s Note

Dear Reader

As the contents of these pages show, the year 2006 was packed with important events under the umbrella of ASEM and ASEF. Hence, the second and third trimester issues of this newsletter have been combined in this bumper edition. We hope that you find the information useful and this edition worth keeping on your shelf or passing along to an interested friend as a reference of key events that took place in this important commemorative year for ASEM. ASEM’s 10th anniversary, the subject of our lead articles, also heralds the coming 10th birthday of Asia-Europe Foundation. Do keep a watch for special publications and events to mark the achievements of the past ten years and to chart the way beyond.

Even as we embrace the diversity of our many varied constituencies in advancing ASEM’s unique role as a promoter and facilitator of greater mutual understanding and collaboration between Asia and Europe, the need to be proactive in cultivating a deeper awareness and sensitivity of cross-cultural differences has only increased. The second focus area of this special edition therefore delves into the ASEM Interfaith Dialogue and ASEF’s continuing work to support this vital process, which started in Bali in 2005 and moved on to Cyprus in 2006. Next year, China will play host to the ongoing series aimed at practical measures to improve relations between different faiths.

While many if not most of the areas of ASEF’s work cuts across different sectors, our platforms for action remain rooted in activities that advance Intellectual, Cultural, Youth and Education (or People-to-People) exchange, as well as work with the Mass Media (through our Public Affairs arm). To distinguish these different fields of ASEF’s work, we have refreshed the appearance of the respective department banners to provide a stronger visual identity to them. At the same time, given the transversalism of many key issues in Asia-Europe cooperation, joint work on thematic areas is being intensified, such as in the Cultures and Civilisations Dialogue, the field of higher Education, the area of Youth as the source of future leadership and Artistic expression as a way of communicating beyond linguistic and socioeconomic or psycho-social borders.

As always, we look forward to receiving your feedback about this newsletter. Do write to info@asef.org. Also, keep a lookout for the revamped ASEF website (www.asef.org) next year, that will be offering better user-accessibility to key information in this fast-paced world, and greater interactiveness for seekers of information about developments in Asia-Europe ties.

ASEF wishes you plenty of good health, peace and prosperity to enjoy with your loved ones in the year 2007.

the ASEF editorial team

The following ASEM 6 Summit-related documents are available for download at the ASEM InfoBoard (www.aseminfoboard.org):

- Chairman’s Statement of the Sixth Asia-Europe Meeting
- Helsinki Declaration on the Future of ASEM - Three guiding principles to lead ASEF successfully into its second decade.
- ASEM Declaration on Climate Change - The response from ASEF countries to the current serious threat to sustainable development and the future of Planet Earth.
- ASEM in Tenth Year: Looking Back, Looking Forward - A study done by Japan Center for International Exchange and Network for European Studies of University of Helsinki, this document is an evaluation of ASEM in its first decade and an exploration of its future possibilities.
- 10 Years of ASEM: Global Challenges - An overview of ASEM, its mechanism, activities and achievements, and its future.
Special Report:
Second ASEM Interfaith Dialogue

The second ASEM Interfaith Dialogue in Larcana, Cyprus, brought together religious leaders, policy makers, journalists and other intellectuals from 38 ASEM countries and the European Commission. Co-organised by Cyprus and Malaysia, it was opened by the President of the Republic of Cyprus Tassos Papadopoulos.

The three-day Dialogue process was held with the backdrop of several notable crisis in interfaith and inter-cultural relations. This accentuated the need and importance of this Dialogue, which resulted in the “Larnaca Action Plan”, a list of practical advancements that is built on the “Bali Declaration” adopted a year before (both documents are available at www.aseminfoboard.org).

As part of the third year of the Cultures & Civilisations Dialogue programme, the 9th ASEF Talks on the Hill meeting addressed the issue of managing freedom of expression in multi-faith and multi-ethnic communities in Asia and Europe in a meeting held from the 29th of June – 1st of July at the Kykkos Monastery in Cyprus. Organised and timed to immediately precede the 2nd ASEM Interfaith Dialogue, some of the major points of this “Talks on the Hill” meeting were presented during a working group of the Dialogue, and these outcomes contributed to much of the discussions and debate that followed.

Facilitated by Prof. Dr. Jo Groebel, former head of the European Media Institute and currently the Director of German Digital Institute, the 9th ASEF “Talks on the Hill” meeting brought together twelve high-level participants from diverse ethnic and religious communities as well as professional backgrounds.

The choice of this topic was very timely in light of the recent international tensions surrounding the publication of caricatures of the Muslim Prophet Muhammad in Denmark and several other countries. Despite the international attention that was focused on this issue, it was important to underscore that this incident was not isolated. Numerous tensions have arisen in the recent past over a clash of artistic or literary expression that has conflicted with sensitivities of communities, for example at the time of the publication of *Satanic Verses* by Salman Rushdie, and there was clear need to address this phenomenon.

For more information, please contact Ms. Sohni Kaur at sohni.kaur@asef.org, or visit www.civdialogue.asef.org).
The 4th ASEF Journalists’ Colloquium marked the second consecutive year that ASEF conducted a Journalists’ Colloquium in direct support of the ASEM Interfaith Dialogue. Thirteen journalists from twelve countries attended the Colloquium, which aimed to focus on the media’s role in promoting interfaith understanding and co-operation within and among societies; examining interpretations of key concepts, such as “interfaith” engagement, “press freedom”, “controversy in reporting sensitive issues”, the impact of globalisation and changes to what constitutes “a primary audience “and the changing dimensions”of the public space”.

The Colloquium took place only several weeks after the rising of two highly controversial expressions: the cartoon of Muslim Prophet Muhammad and the movie of Da Vinci Code, hence this gathering of practising editors, journalists, columnists and correspondents could not have been more relevant and timely.

Co-moderated by Mr. Asad Latif (Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Singapore) and Dr. Andrew Taussig (International Institute of Communication, UK), the discussions were at a sustained level of high energy throughout the Colloquium. All participants contributed actively and candidly. Despite their different political orientations, the journalists argued their viewpoints with professionalism and intellectual fairness, and produced a cogent and useful final output. Another distinction was the group’s strong sense of a shared ethic and their ability to form immediate bonds of mutual respect and friendship within a short time. As one participant summed up, “whatever their faith, politics, nationality, good people make good journalists”.

The outcomes of this Colloquium were then translated into succinct interventions during the Media Working Group of the 2nd ASEM Interfaith Dialogue, to which the participants of this Colloquium had been accorded special access that allowed them to observe and participate actively in all meeting sessions.

For more information, please contact Mr. Cahyadi Indrananto at cahyadi@asef.org.

ASEM Youth Dialogue 2006
First Asia-Europe Youth Interfaith Dialogue
19 – 23 November
Navarra (Spain)

During the four-day event, the young representatives of churches, faiths and youth religious organisations and networks, together with experts in inter-religious dialogue from the 38 ASEM countries, will be exchanging views and experiences based on their respective religions and spiritual traditions.

The dialogue will also reflect on how religions can assist in facing critical issues that concern our societies, and will try to discover and create new pathways to peace through interfaith co-operation. These objectives will be captured in the ASEM Youth Declaration adopted by the participants at the conclusion of the dialogue, which will be transmitted to the ASEM partners as a part of the youth contribution to the ASEM process. For more information on this event, please contact Ms. Katerina Ragoussi at katerina@asef.org.
“Intense, humbling, eye-opening, challenging, memorable and an opportunity of a lifetime” is how Vani Sathisan described her two-year study abroad experience. This young Singaporean spent two years in Trieste, Italy, where she attained the International Baccalaureate Diploma at the United World College of the Adriatic (UWCAD). In fact, almost every student who has had the opportunity to be on an educational exchange programme would share Vani’s experience too.

For Frenchman Romain Caillaud, his one-year experience in Tokyo studying Japanese and Asian Studies at Waseda University opened a new way of thinking. "I learnt to think beyond mainstream opinions and ideas usually used in France. To put it in a nutshell, I became more aware and tolerant of non Western ways of life," he shared. Studying abroad is a life-changing, horizon-opening experience. And it helps to be well prepared for the adventure. "I strongly advise you to do some proper research into the programmes you are applying to and on the supporting facilities provided by the university. It also helps to open yourself to various channels (mailing lists, websites, friends, blogs, testimonials) of information that will allow you to be well informed about the various study abroad schemes," advises Puspa.
Delima Amri who finished her Masters of Arts in International Relations at the Johns Hopkins University in Bologna, Italy.

If you are searching for the best place to study abroad or an exchange programme in Asia or in Europe, we have good news for you. Studying in a new environment can be both exciting and daunting, which is why we want to provide university students with the right tools and information to get started. The Database on Educational Exchange Programmes (DEEP) is ASEF's newest online portal, to be launched in early 2007, which will help narrow your search and plan your university studies abroad.

Targeted mainly at tertiary students, the portal is chock-a-block filled with relevant information and links to help those who are thinking of studying abroad. The database lists thousands of universities from 38 countries across Asia and Europe, each offering a wide range of programmes and courses. You’ll also learn more about the country, scholarships and bursaries, the visa requirements, credit recognition, and even an estimated cost of living.

The idea behind DEEP is to foster better awareness among university students in Asia and Europe of study opportunities available in the other region. The more you know, the easier and better your decision-making process will be.

The aim is to encourage more young people from the 38 ASEM countries to consider studies around the region, particularly between the two continents.

DEEP was conceived at the Second General Meeting on the ASEM Education Hub (Singapore, 2-5 November 2003) and the ASEM Symposium on Educational Exchange (Tsukuba, Japan, 17-18 November 2003). Participants of both conferences noted that more effort was needed to promote cross-regional study opportunities among students as well as the potential for more partnerships among universities of the two regions.

Educators and governments agreed that greater availability of information about higher education would do much to encourage and facilitate mobility and exchanges in the ASEM's academic community. Hence DEEP was born.

Look out for DEEP in 2007. You’ll never know where your next adventure might bring you to.

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**Special Report: I’mPULSE**

**I’mPULSE**

**Third Asia-Europe Music Camp**

14-21 May 2006

Beijing (China)

Fifteen months after its launch in February 2005, I’mPULSE successfully implemented the third music camp series as a part of the programming for the Dashanzi International Art Festival on 12-22 May 2006 in Beijing (China). ASEF’s efforts to promote process-oriented platforms have led to I’mPULSE Beijing focusing on DJ exchange.

Eighteen emerging DJs from Europe and Asia engaged in a one-week dialogue and workshops through comprehensive digital music experimentation. Internationally acclaimed DJs from the Asian underground scene: Sam Zaman of State of Bengal and Ges-E of Nasha Records (UK) provided a close-up on the possibility of representation, translation and migration of Asian and European DJ-culture.

To further highlight the coming together of all these Asian and European artists in China, a series of interactive multi-media installation presenting Beijing’s daily life were created by German artists Walkscreen: Ruthe Zuntz and Michael Reitz along with Masato Tsutsui (Japan).

Stressing the importance of programme development alongside ASEF’s objectives both on the organisational and artistic side, ASEF played a significant role in co-curating the DJ exchange in Beijing, China with Leon Lee, Producer, Pentatonic Workshop (China) and Aleksander Motturi, Artistic Director of Clandestino Festival (Sweden).

I’mPULSE is a programme of the Asia-Europe Music Camp series, designed to provide a platform for young people to exchange their ideas on music. Its primary aim is to encourage fresh minds to pursue the development of their music concepts by learning from each other.

ASEF co-organised this project with the Dashanzi International Art Festival (DIAF 2006) with support from the British Council, Goethe Institut-Beijing, Hart Center for Arts, the One Minutes Foundation, Beijing-Tokyo Art Project, Vibes and Club Tango.

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Copyright notice: All photos by Walkscreen: Zuntz & Reitz (2006)
Twenty-one Chinese students, aged between 18 and 24, were selected from different Beijing schools by the organisers to take part in this four-day event. These youngsters had the opportunity to work together, meet foreign and local musicians from the DJ scene, develop their own creative stories, and film and edit their one-minute videos with guidance from video artists and teachers, Yue Gu and Zhao Chen Ding. Works produced were presented and screened in a session opened to the public at the Hart Centre, with the presence of the eighteen I’mPULSE DJs and their facilitators, and featured in a multi-media installation set-up as a part of the DJ’s performance at Club Tango on the 19-20 May, with the attendance of more than 3,000 people.

Most of the videos created during this period automatically entered the One Minutes Country and Cities Competition, in Amsterdam in November 2006.

The 8th ASEF Talks on the Hill was held on 7-9 May 2006 on the topic of “Re-righting Intellectual Property – Economic and Social Policy Challenges in Asia and Europe,” at the ASEF premises in Singapore.
Beginning with an overview of the philosophical and economic rationale behind the development of intellectual property rights, the meeting went on to discuss the pertinent issues faced by the countries of ASEM at the level of regional and international institutions. A further case study on specific intellectual property issues in the health care sector examined the clash that can occur between sometimes opposing priorities and goals. Finally, this meeting addressed questions related to the economic and political challenges as well as cultural perceptions and beliefs of the population that need to be recognised in the enforcement of intellectual property law and policy into various societies.

Mr. David Celdran, Senior Anchorperson of the ABS-CBN News Channel in the Philippines, delivered his lecture titled “Tabloid Democracy: The Paradox of Press Freedom in Asia and Europe” as part of the 14th ASEF Lecture Tour.

Through a comparative study of the media experience in a selected number of countries in Southeast Asia, Mr. Celdran showed how the deregulated media environments and unbridled commercialisation of the press in these countries threaten to trivialise public discourse on one hand, and sensationalise, if not exacerbate political and ethnic conflict, on the other. The experience of democratic transition in Asia and in the new democracies in Europe, show a similar contradiction of political underdevelopment despite the presence of a newly assertive and free press.

Indeed, even as citizens jealously hold on to their hard-earned liberties, many public intellectuals and reformers within the media ask:

~ Why is more freedom of the press creating less meaningful political engagement among citizens and less accountability among their leaders?
~ How can we continue to guard our free and independent press while instituting reforms that enable it to credibly assert itself in the public sphere?
~ How can the press serve as a watchdog to the powerful in an environment where the pressures of the market place are compounded by political and economic under-development?

Mr. Celdran’s lecture was hosted by the following institutions in Europe: Institute of European Affairs (Dublin), University of Amsterdam and International Institute for Asian Studies (Amsterdam), Swedish Institute for International Affairs, University of Tampere and the Soros Foundation (Riga).

The final report of the lecture is available online at http://www.civdialogue.asef.org and will be published in the third annual ASEF Cultures & Civilisations Dialogue publication. For more information, please contact Ms. Sohni Kaur at sohni.kaur@asef.org

The meeting brought together 12 experts from various disciplines, backgrounds and expertise for two days of intensive brainstorming and debate on this subject. The discussions were moderated by Ambassador Philippe Kridelka, Belgian Ambassador to UNESCO and a former ASEF Governor.

The final report of the meeting is available online at http://www.civdialogue.asef.org, and will be published in the third annual ASEF Cultures & Civilisations Dialogue publication. For more information, please contact Ms. Sohni Kaur at sohni.kaur@asef.org
Mr. Pieter Feith, Head of the EU-led Aceh Monitoring Mission (AMM), delivered a lecture giving a first-hand account of the experience of leading the mission in Aceh following the 2005 peace agreement between Aceh separatist group, Free Aceh Movement (GAM) and the Indonesian government. The AMM is the first such initiative by the European Union (EU) in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) region under its European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP). Dr. Leonard Sebastian of the Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies (IDSS, Singapore) joined the panel as the discussant.

The lecture covered the work of the mission, the main results that have been achieved and issues of confidence building and sustainability. Mr. Feith argued that the AMM represented a new way for the EU to conduct peace missions on the basis of rapid deployment, comprehensiveness of the mission scope and with strong co-operation between regional organisations.

The lecture, co-organised with the IDSS, was well attended by about 70 members of the diplomatic corps, academics and members of civil society. Media coverage of the meeting was provided by Radio Singapore International (RSI), whose programme can be accessed through the following link:
www.podcast.sg/rsi_english/perspective/audio/perspective_aceh.mp3

For more information, please contact Ms. Sohni Kaur at sohni.kaur@asef.org

Ten prominent Asian and European experts from the academe, international non-government organisations (NGOs), research centres, think tanks and government officials gathered for a one-and-a-half day meeting to discuss the issue “How do regional communities in Europe and East Asia help in the process of post-conflict reconstruction?”, as possible topic for the 5th Asia-Europe Roundtable (AER) which will tentatively be held in Seoul, Korea, sometime next year.
In a lecture series hosted in partnership between ASEF and the Singapore Institute for International Affairs (SIIA), accredited journalist to the UN Headquarters in Geneva, Mr. Richard Werly, delivered a talk on what challenges he thinks lie ahead for the next United Nations Secretary-General which he had already long predicted would come from Asia. Attended by 35 people from the diplomatic corps, academics and members of civil society in Singapore, Mr. Werly asserted – based on his observations and discussions with various sources – that one of the most important challenges was that the new UN chief had to be a consensus builder, reunited the organisation and bridging all the different opinions and interests among all the member states. There is also the management challenge of implementing reforms which are currently far from being implemented or accepted as well as transforming the world body into a cost-efficient organisation. Lastly, there was the credibility challenge, whereby upholding human rights and preventing disasters (natural and human-made) would remain at the very core of the UN’s objectives.

Mr. Werly is a journalist for the Swiss daily newspaper, Le Temps, and also contributes to the French daily newspaper, Liberation. He has expertise and interest on issues pertaining to UN reforms, developmental challenges and humanitarian assistance. Mr. Werly also actively participated in the preparatory workshop for the 5th Asia-Europe Roundtable (AER).

For further information, please contact Ms. Natalia Figge at natalia@asef.org

The Networking Asian & European Young Volunteers’ Conference brought together 29 representatives involved in voluntary service activities on local and/or international level, from 19 ASEM countries. It was co-organised by the International Youth Cooperation Development Centre (CYDECO) under the National Committee on Youth of Vietnam (NCYV) and ASEF, in co-operation with the Coordinating Committee for International Voluntary Service (CCIVS).

The participants of the conference represented 27 voluntary service organisations from Asia and Europe with different backgrounds and scopes of activities in the field of youth work. The participants were from 18 to 30 years old.

The conference aimed to provide a platform for a ‘contact-making’ process among representatives from Asian and European voluntary service youth organisations which would translate into a channel for information-sharing and co-operation opportunities for various projects related to volunteerism in Asia and Europe.

The International Workcamp Organisation (IWO) and Coordinating Committee for International Voluntary Service (CCIVS) announced their interest in co-organising the 2nd ‘Networking Conference for Asian and European Young Volunteers’ to take place in Seoul, Korea in 2007.
Dr. Sebastian Bersick (Belgium), Senior Research Fellow of the European Institute for Asian Studies embarked on the 15th Lecture Tour during 14-28 July 2006.

Dr Bersick’s lecture kicked off in Singapore, where ASEF organised a dinner talk with a small audience from the diplomatic and academic communities. In the other cities, the lecture was organised in partnership and hosted by the following six institutions in Southeast Asia: University of the Philippines; the Asian Institute of Management (Manila), Centre for European Studies, Chulalongkorn University (Bangkok); Institute of Strategic and International Studies (Kuala Lumpur); and, the Centre for Strategic and International Studies (Jakarta). It reached out to approximately 200 persons from diverse backgrounds.

Dr. Bersick’s lecture addressed how the European Union (EU) has touched upon processes of region-building in East Asia and has facilitated the coming to existence of Asian soft power. Timed to reach influential circles prior to the ASEM 6 Summit in Helsinki this September, the speaker analysed how the ASEM process constitutes a Euro-Asian soft power approach to global governance.

The final paper is available online at http://www.civdialogue.asef.org and will be published in the third annual ASEF Cultures & Civilisations Dialogue publication. For more information, please contact Ms. Sohni Kaur at sohni.kaur@asef.org

The International Youth Forum is an event for promoting international awareness and friendship among young people, organised annually since 1990 by the National Council of Youth Organizations in Korea in co-operation with different partners. Each meeting is dedicated to a contemporary theme that focuses on global issues relevant for Youth. The 17th International Youth Forum gathered 74 participants from 22 ASEM countries, with various profiles and experiences in the field of youth activities.

The 17th IYF was dedicated to “A World Without Borders: United Nations’ Millennium Development Goals and Youth Participation”, with the following sub-topics: (1) MDGs and promotion of global awareness, (2) Youth challenges to achieve MDGs and (3) Solidarity for global sustainability in MDGs. The main aims of the Forum were to let Youth from Asia and Europe understand the MDGs and become encouraged to contribute to achieving these goals at the local and international levels. This event was organised and hosted by the National Council of Youth Organizations in Korea and the International Workcamp Organization, with the support of the Korean National Youth Commission and ASEF, in co-operation with Asian Youth Council and the World Assembly of Youth.

Participants had an opportunity to experience various learning methods for exploring the theme through lectures, dynamic group discussions, and creative tasks. The group members showed respect for the diversity of opinions and great interest for sharing experience of actions and knowledge related to the theme. The project also contained activities to facilitate group development, cultural exchanges and study trips in Seoul and Gyeongju that introduced Korean history and culture.

ASEF Youth Connections is a funding window open to youth organisations in ASEM countries that seek to promote linkages among youth and youth organisations and encourage a multiplicity of initiatives to strengthen relations between Asian and European youth at the level of the national organisations and local communities.

For more details, contact Ms. Katerina Ragoussi at katerina@asef.org.
Co-organised with Leiden University and the International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS), the thirteenth edition of the ASEF University programme brought together 39 university students from 30 ASEM countries, selected for their academic excellence and leadership potential, to discuss the theme “Cross-cultural Perspectives on the International Legal Order in the 21st Century.”

The summer school was composed of an extensive academic programme, complemented by a colourful cultural itinerary and extra-curricular activities. The programme was opened by Mr. Joris Demmink, Secretary General of the Dutch Ministry of Justice; Mr. Jan Hoekema, Dutch Ambassador for International Cultural Co-operation; Prof Wim Stokhof, Director of the IIAS and Mr. Ramon Molina, ASEF Director for People-to-People Exchange. The keynote address by Judge Hishashi Owada of the International Court of Justice coincided with his inaugural lecture as Leiden University Professor of Relations between Europe and Japan.

Lecturers from Asia and Europe explored four main themes: (1) the rule of law, (2) human rights, (3) settlement of disputes and international adjudication and (4) governance and accountability: challenges for the EU, ASEAN and ASEM. Leiden’s Faculty of Law made a substantial contribution to the lectures, along with guest professors and experts from both regions.

The students visited the Peace Palace at The Hague, where they were given a tour of the premises of the Permanent Court of Arbitration and an orientation into the history and work of the Court. In a two-day Moot Court workshop facilitated by the Leiden Faculty of Law, participants developed pleadings on important international disputes, to practice skills in analysis and argumentation.

The delegates of the 13th ASEF University were welcomed by Mayor Henri Lenferink, who hosted a reception for the group at the Leiden City Hall. The Japanese Embassy generously hosted the closing reception for the ASEF University at the SieboldHuis, the premier information centre and museum about Japan in the Netherlands.

For information about the ASEF University programme, please email Ms. Valerie Remoquillo at valerie@asef.org.
The primary aim of this project is to promote the mutual discovery and building of new inter-relationships between Asians and Europeans by relating their shared concerns and common aspirations through each others’ eyes.

On the occasion of this meeting, three public events were organised on the sideline. On 11 August 2006, together with the LASALLE-SIA College for the Arts, a public talk, “Images and Narratives” was held. Three comic artists from the team – Craig Au Yeung (China), Frédéric Felder (France), and Rafal Gosiniecki (Poland) – gave presentations to a group of about 75 students, faculty members and members of the public.

On 15 August 2006, a full-day Comics Workshop was conducted by NIX (Belgium) for 15 LASALLE-SIA students. An exhibition displaying the work in progress was held at the Promenade of the National Library from 18 – 31 August 2006.

The meeting was organised in partnership with National Library Board, Singapore, with the support of LASALLE-SIA College of Arts, Singapore; The Federal Public Service Foreign Affairs Belgium; Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Czech Republic; Royal Netherlands Embassy in Singapore; Media Development Authority Singapore; Furryfish Singapore; Zocard Singapore; Singapore Museum of Toys; and Gallery Hotel Singapore as the official hotel sponsor.

For more information about this meeting and the project, please visit the project’s website at http://comix.asef.org.

Twelve comic artists hailing from Belgium, China, Czech Republic, France, Finland, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Netherlands, Philippines, Poland and Vietnam, and a team facilitator from Singapore met in Singapore from 31 July to 12 August to explore the subject of “migration” and contribute to the creation of a comics publication reflecting the impact of this phenomenon on the individual and society. A comics anthology between 150 to 180 pages will be published.

ASIA-EUROPE COMICS PROJECT:
WHAT’S TO COME?

October 2006
November 2006
December 2006
January 2007
February 2007

Contact and negotiation with publishers
Content compilation and design
The ASEF University Alumni Network (ASEFUAN) held its 5th Conference and Annual General Meeting (AGM) in Bangkok, Thailand from 10 - 13 August 2006. The AGM is the annual forum for alumni of the ASEF University programmes, and this year’s event was co-organised by ASEFUAN and the Centre for European Studies at Chulalongkorn University and supported by ASEF, Thailand’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Delegation of the European Commission to Thailand.

The generous and enthusiastic support for this year’s meeting enabled more participation from alumni members. Up to 60 alumni from 24 ASEM countries were present, representing alumni from each university batch, all the way from the first ASEF University to the 13th ASEF University. This is the first ASEFUAN AGM held after the ASEM enlargement and the participation of new ASEM countries, such as Cambodia and Poland, was warmly welcomed.

The theme of the conference was Sustainable Development in International Perspectives: Regional and Interregional Collaboration. ASEFUAN members engaged in a lively panel discussion with Senator Panat Tasneeyanond, Member of the Thai Senate for Tak Province; Dr. Charit Tingsabadh, Director of the Centre for European Studies at Chulalongkorn University; Mr. Friedrich Hamburger, Ambassador of the Delegation of the European Commission to Thailand; and Dr. Dechen Tsering of the United Nations Environmental Programme. Participants also broke into four separate working groups and exchanged Asian and European views on sustainable development seen from an economic dimension, business dimension, political dimension and environmental dimension.

Participants also outlined activities for coming year and elected the new set of Executive Committee members. Puspa Delima Amri from Indonesia was elected President of the Executive Committee for 2006-2007 and Jussi Lehmusvaara from Finland as the new Vice-President. The other four members of the committee are Nadia Karavias (United Kingdom), Sungjin Kang (Korea), Nick McIlroy (Ireland) and Dinesh Sathisan (Singapore).

For more information about the ASEF University Alumni Network, please visit www.asefuan.net.
ASEF, together with World Press Photo Foundation (WPPF) and the Philippine Center for Photojournalism (PCP), co-organised the Asia-Europe Forum for Young Photographers in Manila, Philippines on 21-27 August 2006. This year’s forum brought together 21 photojournalists originating from 20 countries in Europe and Asia.

ASEF organised the 17th ASEF Lecture Tour “The European Union through the Eyes of Asia – A Comparative Study of Media Perceptions” in Brussels, Paris, Preston, Bristol, Ulster and Pamplona. The lecture was delivered by Prof. Martin Holland, who holds the Jean Monnet Chair of European Integration and International Relations and is the Director of the National centre for Research on Europe at the University of Canterbury. He is also one of ASEF’s partners in the newly established European Studies in Asia (ESiA) platform (http://esia.asef.org).

Prof. Holland used this opportunity to elaborate on previous work he had done on the topic as well as further extensive studies in collaboration with ASEF and a consortium of Asian universities under the ESiA platform analysing perceptions of the EU in major newspapers and TV channels in China, Singapore, South Korea, Japan and Thailand. These findings form the first phase of the investigation – the next step being an information and attitude survey of the general public and elite in the target countries.

Needless to say, there is very little rigorous study of how Europe is seen by external eyes and this type of analysis has several policy implications for Europe’s foreign relations.

In the various cities, Prof. Holland’s lecture was hosted by Le Centre d’Etudes Europeennes Sciences-Po (Paris), University of Central Lancashire, University of Ulster, University of Bristol, University of Navarra (Pamplona), European Policy Centre (Brussels).

The final paper is available online at http://www.civildialogue.asef.org and will be published in the third annual ASEF Cultures & Civilisations Dialogue publication. For more information, please contact Ms. Sohni Kaur at sohni.kaur@asef.org

Magdalena Herrera, Art Director for National Geographic (France), Hans-Jürgen Burkard, photographer for Stern Magazine (Germany) and veteran Filipino photojournalists, Alex Baluyut and Romeo Gacad of AFP facilitated the sharing of experiences, techniques and concepts amongst the young photojournalists.

Manila’s Urban Youth, which was the focus of the two and a half day photo assignment, resulted in the creation of photo story installation presented at the Mall of Asia on 27 August 2007. A photo exhibition was organised by PCP in Manila in September.

This project marked the renewal of partnership between the ASEF and WPPF following the success of the fora organised in Amsterdam in 2003 and in Hanoi in 2004. This year, it received sponsorship from the National Commission for Culture and the Arts of the Philippines and was supported by the Japan Foundation Manila, the Delegation of the European Commission, Asahi Shimbun, Royal Academy of Fine Arts (Hogeschool Gent Belgium), Instituto Politecnico do Porto in Portugal, Kodak Professional, Raw File Images, Columbia Sports Wear and the Konrad Adenauer Asia Center for Journalism at the Ateneo Manila University. Among its contributors are JT Photo World, PLDT, Airborne Access and Mall of Asia and the Philippine Daily Inquirer as its media partner.

Prof. Holland used this opportunity to elaborate on previous work he had done on the topic as well as further extensive studies in collaboration with ASEF and a consortium of Asian universities under the ESiA platform analysing perceptions of the EU in major newspapers and TV channels in China, Singapore, South Korea, Japan and Thailand. These findings form the first phase of the investigation – the next step being an information and attitude survey of the general public and elite in the target countries.

Needless to say, there is very little rigorous study of how Europe is seen by external eyes and this type of analysis has several policy implications for Europe’s foreign relations.
Seventy-five participants from 29 ASEM countries attended the Asia-Europe e-Learning Colloquy, which was co-organised with the Korea National Open University and the Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development of Korea. They comprised of academics, practitioners, consultants and representatives of institutions and organisations involved in the study, management, development and implementation of initiatives in the field of e-learning in higher education.

The conference aimed at building a platform for co-operation, called the Asia-Europe e-Learning Network, among Asian and European universities and higher education institutions engaged in e-learning programmes. Mr. Markku Markkula from the Lifelong Learning Institute of the Helsinki University of Technology, Dr. Dae-Joong Hwang of the Korea Education and Research Information Service, and Prof. Tae Rim Lee of the ASEM ICT and e-Learning Network delivered key presentations, along with nine other experts from Asia and Europe who contributed as working group chairpersons and discussants. The working groups were devoted to discussions on the adaptation of e-Learning in conventional universities, the economics of e-Learning, career development, training of e-Learning professionals, quality assurance in e-Learning systems, interoperability and international collaboration. A dialogue among heads of participating e-Learning and academic networks was also organised to foster more involvement in the Asia-Europe e-Learning Network.


To know more about the ASEM Education Hub and its projects, please contact Ms. Valerie Remoquillo at valerie@asef.org or visit www.elearningcolloquy.org.
From 25 September to 6 October, ASEF organised the 16th ASEF Lecture Tour titled “Knowledge Regions and Innovation in an era of Globalisation: Challenges and Opportunities for Europe and Asia.”

The lecture was delivered by Dr. Miguel Santos Neves, Head of the Asia Programme at the Institute of International and Strategic Studies (IEI) in Lisbon, Portugal. It was hosted by Korea Institute for International Economic Policy, China Institute of International Studies (Beijing), Hong Kong Baptist University, International Institute of Macau and Hitotsubashi University (Tokyo).

In his lecture, Dr. Neves elaborated the emergence of “knowledge society” paradigm as a major challenge that both European and Asian societies are facing, and the “knowledge regions” as an important phenomenon that plays a critical role in this process. He also highlighted the paradox in interactions, ties and relations between European and Asian “knowledge regions” that have not received the attention they deserve by policymakers, and asserted that it remains by and large a missing dimension in the analysis of EU-Asia bilateral relations. Some “knowledge regions” that were analysed in this lecture are Catalunha, Baden-Wurttemberg, Uusimaa and Zuid-Nederland in Europe, as well as Singapore, China (the Bohai region and the South China triangle) and Japan (Osaka and Kyoto) in Asia.

This lecture had successfully stimulated debate on this strategic dimension of EU-Asian relations by introducing a more disaggregated level of analysis and a wider and more integrated approach that goes beyond the traditional ways of viewing inter-regional relations. Its final paper is available online at www.civdialogue.asef.org and will be published in the third annual ASEF Cultures & Civilisations Dialogue publication.

In conjunction with the visit to Singapore by President Klaus during his 11-day tour of five Asian countries, ASEF partnered the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies (ISEAS) to present this distinguished address on the topic, “Reflections on European Integration”.

It attracted some 250 guests, including local dignitaries, senior foreign diplomats, representatives from policy and educational institutions, regional organisations, government, private companies and the media.

At the lecture, President Klaus highlighted key issues emerging from the acceleration of the European integration process over the last 20 years. He also provided the perspective of a newer member country located in Central Europe. The lecture, which aimed to create awareness and foster dialogue on a topic of interest to both Asia and Europe, was then concluded with a light lunch reception that allowed the public to interact with the visiting Czech President.

On ASEF’s request, in order to enhance the website’s effectiveness and relevance to the ASEM process, our partners at Universes in Universe – Worlds of Arts (UUWA) have integrated the 13 new ASEM countries into the CulturE-ASEF website, one that has consistently achieved a large number of page views as well as the highest rankings on major search engines, when searching for cultural exchange-related keywords.

This expansion has involved not only the enlargement of UUWA’s database tool with 13 new countries resulting in multiplied interconnections, but has also put in place a new content management system, an indispensable tool for the long term success and sustainability of the website.

The technical restructuring of the website has resulted in cost savings and greater flexibility with regard to any further expansion of the website in the long-term. The website simultaneously underwent a “face lift”, rendering it far more user-friendly with its improved magazine interface. With the abundance of new contacts and links that the expanded CulturE-ASEF features, it will be in a position to raise further awareness of the vast potential in Asia-Europe cultural exchange amongst cultural practitioners in the new ASEM countries and to facilitate actual exchanges, particularly in the field of visual arts.
ASEM in the news
For more articles and clippings on ASEM activities, please visit http://aseminfoboard.org/NewsAndMedia/InTheNews

ASEF in the news
For more articles and clippings on ASEF and its activities, please visit http://www.asef.org/Dir/InTheNews
ASEM Youth Dialogues

The ASEM Youth Dialogue is a programme designed as a platform for youth in the ASEM countries to discuss and express their views on different thematic issues of interest, particularly those that are being tackled in the framework of the ASEM process. It is a channel for young people to add their inputs to the field of Asia-Europe cooperation. Participants to the ASEM Youth Dialogue discuss and formulate an ASEM Youth Statement which is submitted for the consideration of the ASEM Leaders. This commemorative publication presents the Youth Statements on Globalisation (Copenhagen, Denmark in 2002), Security Challenges (Cebu, the Philippines in 2003), Sustainable Development (Hanoi, Vietnam in 2004) and Cultures and Civilisations (Vienna, Austria in 2005).

ASEF has worked in partnership with the following institutions: the Danish Youth Council, the Ayala Foundation, the Vietnam Youth Federation and the Young European Federalists of Austria.

Democracy in Asia, Europe and the World: Toward a Universal Definition

Published by Marshall Cavendish Academic, July 2006


Democracy has long been among the most contested concepts in political science and political philosophy. Yet, since the 1990s, there has been a widespread tendency to think as if a universally acceptable definition is already in hand. The catalysts for this change appear to be the worldwide wave of democratisation and revived attention to the study of democracies. The underlying assumption is that we have a shared definition of democracy. This would imply that countries that are undergoing a process of democratisation will eventually reach a stage that conforms to such a definition. In extending its geographical scope across the world, has the concept of democracy lost some of the sharp contentious characteristics of the past? Or, on the contrary, will these profound divisions continue to prevail? Would it be possible for Asian and European political scientists to study and evaluate their countries’ democracies from a shared definition and common theory of democracy? This book seeks to provide in-depth debate on these issues that have pertinent applications for democracy in practice in Asia and Europe. Analysis on regional variations follows general and theoretical issues related with the conceptions of democracy in the two continents. It is the result of an interactive reflection on the topic of democracy between some of the most prominent academics from Asia and Europe.

This book is the result of an interactive reflection on the topic of democracy between academics from Asia and Europe such as Jean Leca (Institut D’Etudes Politiques, France), Jean Blondel (European University Institute, Italy), Inoguchi Takashi (University of Tokyo, Japan), Bertjan Verbeek (University of Nijmegen, The Netherlands), Ian Neary (Oxford University, United Kingdom), Ferdinand Mueller-Rommel (University of Lueneburg, Germany), Baogang He (Deakin University, Australia), Dong-Jin Jang (Yonsei University, Korea), and Michele Schmiegelow (University of Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgium). Chapters of this book were collated, arranged and edited by Chung-Si Ahn, President (2004) of the Korean Association of International Studies (KAIS) and Bertrand Fort, ASEF Deputy Executive Director.

Call for Papers

The Asia-Europe Journal is calling for contributions from Asian scholars writing about Europe, or European scholars writing about Asia.

Articles should cover bi-regional relations in the fields of politics, history, economics, culture or communication. It should be in English, no longer than 7,000 words, footnoted with an abstract and previously unpublished.

Please email your submission in electronic .doc format to: asiaeuropejournal@asef.org

For further information on the Asia Europe Journal, please visit www.asef.org/aej or contact Ms. Leonie Schneider at leonie.schneider@asef.org
Asia-Europe Journal

Volume 4 Number 2, June 2006

- Fidel Valdez Ramos. Europe is where the future is being shaped
- Jörgen Örström Möller. Global trends affecting Asia
- Willem Van der Geest. Political and Security Issues in EU - East Asia Relations
- Wei-Wei Zhang. The Long-term Outlook for China's Political Reform and European Interests
- Robert Ash. The Long-term Outlook for Economic Reform in China
- Shujie Yao. How does China perform in Science and Technology?
- Roberta Zavoretti. Family Based Care for China's Ageing Population
- Sophie Boisseau du Rocher. Can ASEAN and the EU-ASEAN Partnership be supportive in Northeast Asia?
- Sebastian Bersick. Strategic Considerations in the US-China Relationship: A Role for Europe?
- Seam Golden. Socio-cultural Aspects of the Relationship between the EU and East Asia
- Book Reviews: Watanabe; Kokubun and Wang; Wang and Zheng; Boisseau du Rocher and Fort.

Volume 4 Number 3, October 2006

- Bernd Wächter. Asia Europe Co-operation in Higher Education
- Jörn Keck. Renewed Strength of the Japanese Economy and Japan EU Relations
- Michael Reiterer. Japan and the EU: Shared Foreign Policy Interests
- Monir Hossain Moni. Japan-UK: Perspectives of Partnership
- Norbert Palanovics. Quo vadis, Japanese ODA?
- Gesine Foljanty-Jost and Carmen Schmidt. Local Political and Institutional Changes in Japan
- Albrecht Rothacher. Japan’s Power Elite revisited
- Helen Jones. Local and Global Imperatives for Women in Mongolia
- David Seth Jones. ASEAN and Trans-boundary Hazard Pollution
- Totok Sarsito. Javanese Culture as Source of Legitimacy for Soeharto’s Government
- Cesar de Prado Yepes. Regionalisation of Higher Education Services in Europe and East Asia
- Antal Szabo and Anna Petrosyan. SMEs in the Caucasian Countries in Transition
- Book Reviews: Gössmann/Waldenberger; Nihon Keizai Shimbun

Volume 4 Number 4, December 2006

- Simon Harvey. The Enlightenment and Ideas of Liberty in Europe
- Chaibong Hahm. Confucianism and the Concept of Liberty
- Taro Aso. Central Asia as a Corridor of Peace and Stability
- Hae-du Hwang. APEC and Emerging Regionalism in North East Asia
- Jabin Thomas Jacob. European Integration and Lessons for China
- A.R. Momin. India as a Model for multi-ethnic Europe
- Kristof Rostoski. Development Co-operation between Germany and China: Does China still need Development Aid?
- Olaf Griese. EU China Relations - An Assessment of EU Communications
- Tang Shaocheng. New Trends in Cross-Strait Relations between China and Taiwan
- Magnus Petersson. Myanmar in EU-ASEAN Relations
- James Llewelyn. Diplomatic Divergence: Japanese and British Responses to Indonesia’s Confrontation of Malaysia
- Book Reviews: Hopkirk, Roy; Allison/Jonson; Kleveman; Pearson

Asia-Europe Journal

Editor-in-Chief: Dr. Albrecht Rothacher
Editorial Assistants: Jessica Yom, Leonie Schneider
Editorial Secretary: Zareen Tia Siew Keng

The Asia-Europe Journal is devoted to the interdisciplinary and inter-cultural studies and research between Asia and Europe in the social sciences and humanities. The various aspects of bilateral relationships, comparative studies, Asian studies from a European perspective, or European studies from an Asian viewpoint is covered. Each volume is intended to follow one major subject such as security, historical experiences, cultural perceptions, civic rights, gender issues, regional integration, development, ethnic minorities or other areas of bi-regional interest.

For more information, please contact Ms. Leonie Schneider at or visit http://aej.asef.org.
Staff News

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- Mr. Ahmad Baihaki, Indonesia (Project Assistant)
- Mr. John Funelas, Philippines (Special Assistant to Executive Director)
- Ms. Alex Ahn Sun Joo, Korea (Intern)
- Ms. Anna Kuzina, Estonia (Intern)
- Mr. Eric Pardo Sauvageot, Spain (Intern)
- Ms. Tanja Sillman, Finland (Intern)

Incoming Staff:
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- Mr. Jean Anes, Indonesia (Director)
- Ms. Katelijn Verstraete, Belgium (Project Manager)
- Mr. Rahiman Abdullah, Singapore (Project Executive)
- Ms. Leonie Schneider, Germany (Public Affairs Executive)
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- Mr. Alfredo Garcia Gil, Spain (Intern)
- Ms. Irma Juskenaite, Lithuania (Intern)

Visits to ASEF

21 September 2006: The Secretariat of the Association of North-east Asia Regional Government (NEAR) visited ASEF to learn more about ASEM and ASEF’s organisation and working methods. The delegation was led by Mr Lee Sang Chul (Team Manager of the General Affairs Division), and included a staff officer and a regional and language specialist.

Governors News

- Ambassador Dainius Ginutis Voveris of Lithuania retired as of 3 July 2006.
- Ambassador Ladislav Volko of Slovakia was appointed governor.
- Ambassador Helena Drnovsek Zorko of Slovenia was appointed governor.

Peter Ryan, a career diplomat from Ireland, joined ASEF as the Director of the Intellectual Exchange Department in September 2006. He received his undergraduate and postgraduate degrees from the National University of Ireland in Dublin and worked in Ireland and Australia in the banking sector before joining the Department of Foreign Affairs of Ireland in 1994. His strong interest in Asian-European relations stems from his appointments to the Irish Embassies in Japan, Korea and Singapore. In addition, he served as Deputy Director, Asia-Pacific in the Bilateral Economic Relations Division of the Department of Foreign Affairs. Prior to joining ASEF he was based in Singapore covering e-Business and New Technologies in the Asia-Pacific Region for the Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources of Ireland. Mr. Ryan is married with two children.

Jean Anes was appointed as ASEF’s Director of Cultural Exchange in September 2006. Prior to this, the career diplomat from Indonesia was the Deputy Director of Consular at the Director General for Protocol and Consular in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Jakarta. His previous diplomatic posts took him to the Indonesian Consulates General in Toronto in Canada and Chicago, USA, as well as a course in Berlin, Germany. Mr. Anes holds a BA and MBA in Management from California, USA.
Looking at the Self

“Je est un autre” [“I is another”] says the poet Arthur Rimbaud while his compatriot Jean-Paul Sartre makes his character Garcin, in the play Huis Clos [no exit] say that “Hell is other people”. Would I therefore be hell? Maybe not I, but the search for both I and the Other?

Waiting at the bus stop in the morning, I start to randomly reading captions wherever I find them. “Four million smiles greet the world” on a bus, “feeding IP to the delegates” on a banner, a second bus comes and goes “Another community project by...” and the likes. I have almost given up trying to decipher acronyms in this country of four million hidden smiles. But what is with this wave of using another for every other caption and slogan? Another, a word that can at the same time refer to more of the same and to a different one.

I somehow hazardless ventured out of Europe after having thoroughly roamed it. Having experienced its differences and similarities I was looking for the Other. Something that would make me understand us better and at the same time something freshly surprising in order to challenge my status quo, my beliefs, my thoughts and to nourish my dreams. Discovering a different culture, I might eventually understand my own better and maybe even learn to cherish it. It is like looking out to see the inside, or looking at a mirror, seeing my picture looking back at me? I had always wanted to go to Latin America. Exactly that might have been the reason why I ended up deciding on the opposite direction instead. I landed in the midst of South-East Asia.

Singapore, an island-city-state with her people categorised in races. A rather odd thing for someone growing up going to a German school discussing WWII and reconciliation. However, much more curious is the categorisation itself to me: Chinese, Indians, Malays and... Others. So here, the Other comes from within? Is it this latter label that helps distinguishing the former which in turn seperable into three? Dabbling in Social Sciences one learns that the definition of the Other helps to define or even constitutes the self or in a wider picture other phenomena and cultural units. I would however never dare to suspect such a scheming by the brains of this country to help create separable feelings of belonging solely based on an ethnicity of the father’s father. In this case, I just hope that no-one stuck in this group will go and hunt for his/her identity based on this classification. To keep it simple, we could just suspect that Other is merely just the rest, the uncategorisable remainder.

Out of pecuniary necessity and as a great surprise to myself, I soon saw myself teaching communication and foreign languages at a local polytechnic. I learned much more than my students who refuted many of the stereotypes I had brought in my luggage. Their openness and curiosity about me as the alien resulted in our common discovery of not only the foreign, but their worlds too. I learned about Singapore and her people much more than just some Singlish slang. I was captured by this experience and had to take it a step further. I longed for more than just learning about myself and the Other. It was like searching for new experiences and many Others.

For over six months now, I have been working for the Asia-Europe Foundation. Our mandate is to promote better mutual understanding between the peoples of Asia and Europe; in other words, to introduce one to the Other(s). It is by no means a trial to align everyone and to remove differences. It is the differences that need to be protected and cultivated. Were we all the same, how could we learn from each other? And how could we see the Self if undistinguishable from the Other? Maybe Lacan is more poigniant: “The I is always in the field of the Other”. Therefore, we are not trying to merely live next to each other, but to create a common space for exchange, mingling, development of idea and creativity. Speaking of creativity, how about naming the next project “Another mission to understand the Other(s)”?

Marie Rüppell, Project Assistant for ASEF-Intellectual Exchange, is a French and German national. She has been in Singapore for three years and at ASEF for 6 months.
11-12 January 2007
PARIS, FRANCE
ASEMUS 9th Executive Committee Meeting
Co-organised with Musée du Quai Branly
Museums are key partner institutions of ASEF’s efforts to promote a shared cultural heritage through ASEMUS. During this meeting the official soft-launch of the Virtual Collection of Masterpieces project will take place. This Virtual Collection of Masterpieces is set up with contribution of about 40 museums from Asia and Europe of the ASEMUS consortium who selected each 25 masterpieces out of their collection.

28-30 January 2007
SINGAPORE, ASEF
Cultures & Civilisations Dialogue
10th ASEM Talks on the Hill
(in)Secure Societies: Redefining civil liberties in a changing security environment
ASEM 10th Talks on the Hill meeting will be convened to facilitate an exchange of views, ideas and recommendations on the topic of guaranteeing civil liberties and human rights in situations where changing security risks may call for greater involvement of the government in the everyday lives and activities of populations.

January 2007
Preparatory Meeting for 8th Informal ASEM Seminar on Human Rights
Partners: Raoul Wallenberg Institute and the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs
The organisers of the 8th Informal Seminar on Human Rights, on Freedom of Expression, will meet with the seminar rapporteurs to prepare the background documents for the meeting, planned for September 2007 in Siem Reap, Cambodia. A preliminary report is essential to provide participants with an overview of international legal frameworks, identify contemporary issues and raise questions for the seminar discussions.

26 February–1 March 2007
THE HAGUE, NETHERLANDS
6th Asia-Europe Young Parliamentarians Meeting
Conducted every two years, the meeting gathers participants under 40 years of age members of national, state and provincial legislative bodies in ASEM countries, as well as the European Parliament. Held in an informal setting, it encourages a candid exchange of views and experiences on common challenges and issues faced by legislators in both Asia and Europe.

February–March 2007
ASIA: CHINA, INDONESIA, JAPAN, PHILIPPINES, SINGAPORE
EUROPE: BELGIUM, DENMARK, GERMANY, IRELAND, POLAND, UK
19th/20th ASEM Lecture Tour: Lessons and Reflections on Regionalisation in Asia and Europe: An Asian and European Perspective
Rodolfo Severino and Amb. Berhard Zepter will discuss the Asian and European models of regionalization in various countries around Asia and Europe.

April 2007
EUROPE
Asia-Europe Workshop Series Selection Committee Meeting
The Selection Committee will select six proposals for workshops on themes of common interest to Asia and Europe, to take place between September 2007 and September 2008. The workshops should focus on contemporary topics concerning both Asia and Europe in a comparative perspective, sharing interests of inter-regional or multilateral importance. The deadline for applications is 1st February 2007.

April 2007
SINGAPORE
Launch of the Database on Educational Exchange Programmes (DEEP)
Please refer to the article on DEEP on page 10.

April 2007
ASEF 10th Anniversary Commemorative event
To celebrate its 10th anniversary, ASEF is organising a series of project, events and publications that will highlight the many achievements and landmark projects that have been instrumental in developing strong networks of people, civil society organisations and educational institutions in Asia and Europe over the last 10 years.

27 May 2007
Hamburg, Germany
4th Asia-Europe Journalists’ Seminar
This Seminar, continuing the sequence of previous such fora held alongside previous ASEM Foreign Ministers’ Meetings, will be held on the occasion of 8th ASEM Foreign Ministers’ Meeting. Journalists from ASEM countries will be invited to the Seminar to familiarise and update them on current development and topics being addressed by the ASEM process, and to alert them on the future direction in Asia-Europe relation.