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**News: Asef's New Book: *Dialogue of Cultures: The Asia-Europe Partnership in the Field of Trainings 2009***
While building upon its track record in other established key areas*, ASEF will focus its efforts on three areas of high global impact, in line with priorities identified during the Beijing ASEM7 Summit in October 2008. ASEF’s activities in these specific areas will draw on multi-disciplinary formats and methods designed to create multi-stakeholder platforms for innovative dialogue and action. They also aim to promote bi-regional co-operation through open, non-confrontational dialogue aimed at raising awareness, and the sharing of experiences and good practices among different stakeholders.

A brief overview of these focus themes follow:

**Economy and Society**

The global financial crisis topped the agenda of the 7th Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) Summit last October in Beijing. This crisis is expected to be long and deep. Given the grave social consequences of the crisis, Asia-Europe dialogue on social policies is as important as that on economic policies. At the same time, policies that have gained wide acceptance over the years are now being questioned. Fortunately, ASEAN was designed to be comprehensive and multi-faceted, spanning economic but also political and socio-cultural relations. ASEAN partners, who comprise 60% of the global GDP, have an influential voice in global efforts to address the crisis.

In tandem with the inter-governmental ASEM dialogue on the crisis, ASEF has taken the initiative to articulate a new strategic focus under the theme “Economy and Society”. Under this theme, ASEF will address the confluence of both economic and social policy areas that include regional integration, education, migration and artistic reflection, particularly where difficult policy debates in Asia and Europe could arise. ASEF activities currently focus on the impact of the economic crisis on society, in order to engage government and civil society participants in a collective reflection, and to formulate innovative and integrated policy recommendations, for effective communication to targeted audiences.

Through such initiatives, ASEF seeks to generate interaction and “unusual” partnerships among individuals, organisations and institutions from a range of different backgrounds that are all concerned with the crisis’ consequences for society, but may not have the opportunity to interact with each other. These include economists & NGO activists, academics & practitioners, labour unions & employers, technical experts & artists, international authorities & local grassroots leaders as well as finance & social welfare officials. Among the initiatives ASEF has already undertaken is a cluster of activities held in support of the 9th ASEM Foreign Ministers’ Meeting in Hanoi in May 2009. This included a public lecture and journalists’ seminar centred on the financial crisis, as well as a photography exhibition portraying artistic views on economies in the context of the current global economic crisis.

In the lead-up to the ASEM Summit in Brussels in September 2010, ASEF will continue to explore the impact of the crisis on society in the fields of regional integration, education policy and the arts.

**Environment and Sustainable Development**

The perils of climate change represent an unparalleled global challenge. It is increasingly urgent for both Asia and Europe to achieve real change. Europe has made the fight against climate change and greenhouse gas emissions a priority and is leading international efforts to take such action. Asia is making its own headway towards environmental protection and sustainability, knowing that it is among the regions most affected and vulnerable to the risks arising from climate change and environmental damage.

The links between sustainable development and the environment are nowhere more apparent than in issues such as deforestation, energy security, urbanisation, water management and many others. With the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) closely correlated to these issues, there still remain potent issues in incorporating environment into the larger framework of development, in order to achieve the twin objectives of poverty alleviation and environmental sustainability.

Recognising the importance of Asia-Europe co-operation in these areas, ASEF has prioritised work on the theme “Environment and Sustainable Development”. Recognising the need to provide for a forum where different voices and ideas could be heard and exchanged, ASEF creates platforms for dialogue between various stakeholders in Asia and Europe, resulting in innovative policy recommendations for decision makers in both regions. Over the years, ASEF has established a solid track record in this area through programmes such as the Asia-Europe Environment Forum (EUNForun), and through its partnerships with distinguished organisations such as the Hans und Gesellschaft (Germany), the Institute for Global Strategies (Japan), the Swedish Environment Secretariat for Asia and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

Looking ahead, ASEF aims to build upon these efforts by employing more innovative and multi-faceted approaches. At the same time, ASEF continues to strive to become a green organisation through various measures. These range from reducing use of resources like paper, electricity and water, to recycling programmes as well as encouraging staff and participants to embrace sustainable travelling practices.

**Public Health**

Cognisant of the urgent need to address the challenge presented by the outbreak of influenza pandemics, leaders of the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) stated their determination to combat avian influenza and all possible human influenza pandemics at the 7th ASEM Summit held in Beijing, China in October 2008. The recent outbreak of influenza A (H1N1) has further underlined the urgency and importance of cooperation and being collectively prepared for a pandemic outbreak that could cause fear and socio-economic disruption worldwide.

In response to this, ASEF has made Public Health as one of its priority areas. ASEF’s activities under this theme seek to enhance cooperation and supporting activities among ASEM partners in the field of health. They aim to support multi-stakeholder partnerships to meet challenges of global health security and promote experience sharing among the main players from both regions.

Activities in this area fall under two components. First, the stockpiling of 500,000 doses of anti-viral drugs and sets of personal protection equipments in Singapore, which will be led by the Government of Japan, in collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Japan International Cooperation System (JICS). Second, the ASEF Network for Public Health will be established as a platform for enhanced collaboration on health-related issues between Asia & Europe to strengthen capacity building and the competence of frontline players.

Both components fall under the ASEM initiative for the Rapid Containment of Pandemic Influenza, which was launched on 25th May 2009 during the 9th ASEM Foreign Ministers’ Meeting in Hanoi. In keeping to its commitment to the project, ASEF aims to work closely with its partners towards establishing a platform between Asia and Europe on public health issues. Through this network, ASEF looks forward to making its contribution towards the success of this initiative.

*AOSEF's other key areas are Arts and Culture, Education and Academic Co-operation, Inter-Regional Dialogue and Human Rights and Governance.

**The links between sustainable development and the environment are nowhere more apparent than in issues such as deforestation, energy security, urbanisation, water management and many others.**

**The recent outbreak of Influenza A (H1N1) has further underlined the urgency and importance of cooperation and being collectively prepared for a pandemic outbreak.**
The Asia-Europe Environment Forum (ENVforum) organised a 2-day scenario building training on 3-5 February 2009 in Pondicherry, India. Organised in partnership with the European Consortium for Asian Field Study (ECASF), the one-day forum brought ASEF in partnership with the École Française d’Extrême-Orient (EFEO), who is the ECAF secretariat and a leading exponent of Europe’s continuous intellectual engagement with Asia for more than a century. The emphasis of the forum was on field research on the history of Asian civilisation with implications for contemporary societies in both Asia and Europe, e.g. identifying research priorities in the Social Sciences and Humanities and ethical issues in the management of international conservation programmes, archaeological site management, and the perception of Asia in Europe today.

With the aim of promoting research cooperation between Asia and Europe, the Asia-Europe Forum (ASEF) on Field Study took place on 7 January 2009 in Pondicherry, India. Organised in partnership with the European Consortium for Asian Field Study (ECASF) network, the one-day forum brought ASEF in partnership with the École Française d’Extrême-Orient (EFEO), who is the ECAF secretariat and a leading exponent of Europe’s continuous intellectual engagement with Asia for more than a century. With the rise of Asia on the world scene, the Asian Studies community in Europe needs to address, more than ever, the multiple influences of economic, cultural and political developments in Asia on European societies. This needs to be done in cooperation with Asian scholars.

The one-day forum was held in conjunction with the ECASF Annual Assembly, and brought together 55 Asian and European representatives of academic institutions from 12 ASEF countries. At the EFEO research centre in Pondicherry, the venue permitted the meetings to take place in a context of lively interaction with local (Tamil Nadu) and national Indian institutions and scholars. For more information, please contact Ms Qiuyi Tan at qiuyi.tan@asef.org

Drawing from the previous exercise, participants were able to develop a broader perspective on the issues at stake, leading to fruitful discussion and decisions about upcoming activities. Surrounding the training and the meeting ASEF organised the following public events in Singapore:

- Dr. David Stanners, one of the steering committee member and head of international relations at the European Environment Agency (EEA), delivered a public presentation on 3 February 2009 at the LKY School of Public Policy. About 40 participants from universities, NGOs, private sector and other institutions attended the seminar and used their chance to interact with the speaker to discuss matters related to the EU’s goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions and other issues on Asia. This event contributed to the visibility of ASEF as a relevant organisation and point of reference for the areas of environment and sustainable development.

- Ms Marta Bonifert, executive director of the Regional Environmental Center (REC), was the speaker for the 29th ASEF lecture tour and delivered her first presentation on 5 February 2009 in Singapore, following the steering committee meeting. The lecture was moderated by Mr Mahesh Pradhan, UNEP’s representative on the ENVforum steering committee and thus created further synergies between the different events. More than 40 people attended the lecture that took place at ASEF premises and contributed to strengthen ASEF’s position as a unique actor for relations between Asia and Europe in the area of environment and sustainable development.

For more information, please contact Ms Susanne Wallenroeder or Ms Dewi Tio at env@asef.org

The 29th Asia-Europe Lecture Tour brought Ms Marta Szegleti Bonifert, Executive Director of the Regional Environmental Center (REC) to Asia. This lecture tour is focused on climate change and highlighted examples of successful environmental cooperation among countries in Central and South-East Asia. The speaker emphasised the importance of a comprehensive approach, involving government, civil society as well as business in tackling climate change and cutting down emissions. The event was the second Lecture Tour under the area OiF Environment and Sustainable Development.

The Lecture Tour was hosted in five ASEF member countries, starting in Singapore, hosted by the Asia-Europe Foundation, and went on to Jakarta (Indonesia) where the lecture was hosted by YPB and KHEAT, to Koto Kinabalu (Malaysia), hosted by the Sabah Tourism Board, to Bangkok (Thailand) hosted by the Asian Institute for Technology (AIT) with the support of SENSIA/SDAs and finally to Manila (Philippines) where the lecture was organised by Earthcouncil and hosted by the Management Association of the Philippines and the EC Delegation.

For more information, please contact Ms Susanne Wallenroeder or Ms Dewi Tio at env@asef.org

In conjunction with the exhibition, the National Museum of Ethnology in Osaka and the National Institute for Humanities, Japan also held an International Symposium entitled “Representing Self and Other: The Poetics and Politics in Portraits/Exhibition” in Osaka from 27-28 September 2008.

The Asia-Europe Museum Network’s (ASEMUS) pilot project “Self and Other: Portraits from Asia and Europe” travelling exhibition aimed to challenge stereotypes that Asians and Europeans have of others and themselves. This is in keeping to the objective of promoting mutual understanding and respect between people of Asia and Europe, through the sharing of museum collections and of expertise, as well as fostering a cooperative spirit between the 32 participating museums.

Despite the complexity of the project, the National Museum of Ethnology in Osaka, Japan and the British Museum in the United Kingdom successfully organised travelling exhibitions in 5 venues for the Japanese leg of the exhibition held from 11 September 2008 to 29 March 2009. Participating museums included the National Museum of Ethnology in Osaka, the National Museum of Art in Osaka, the Fukusui Asian Art Museum, the Museum of Modern Art in Hayama, and the Kanagawa Prefectural Museum of Cultural History in Kanagawa. More than 100 Japanese museums, foundations, private collectors and artists have loaned invaluable works to the exhibition, and it is estimated that the exhibition attracted over 77,000 visitors in total.

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The training course was co-organised together by the Never-ending International WorkCamps Exchange (NICE) and in close partnership with the Never-ending International WorkCamps Exchange (ICYE) and the Coordinating Committee for International Voluntary Service (CCIVS) and the International Cultural Youth Exchange (ICYE).

The project brought together 21 participants from 18 ASEM countries. The five day programme focused on the double role that voluntary service plays: empowering young people to be active citizens that participate in society and create positive changes, and developing the capacity of local communities to deal with issues that affect them.

As an outcome, a set of practical tools for local youth organisations that host volunteers, and a handbook on the mechanism of medium and long term voluntary service that will serve both organisations sending and also those receiving volunteers in the way they implement projects.

Another important outcome of the training is the initiative of a long-term project on the creation of a legal framework for volunteering in Asia and in Europe that would facilitate the mobility of young people on both continents. The Coordinating Committee for International Voluntary Service (CCIVS), the Alliance of European Voluntary Service Organisations (Alliance), the Coordinating Committee for International Voluntary Service (CCIVS) and the International Cultural Youth Exchange (ICYE), as well as the Never-ending International WorkCamps Exchange (NICE), the Alliance of European Voluntary Service Organisations (Alliance), the Coordinating Committee for International Voluntary Service (CCIVS) and the International Cultural Youth Exchange (ICYE).

For more information, please contact Mr Bogdan Imre at bogdan.imre@asef.org.

The seminar brought together over 120 participants and observers including official government representatives (from foreign affairs ministries, justice ministries), judges, lawyers, non-government organisations, civic associations and the academe, representing 39 of 45 ASEM partners to discuss the integration of human rights standards in criminal justice systems as well as to share experiences and best practices.

This seminar was co-organised together with the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Raoul Wallenberg Institute (delegated by the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs), in cooperation with the European Court of Human Rights, the National Olympic Memorial Youth Center in Tokyo, Japan.

The 9th Informal ASEM Seminar on Human Rights “Human Rights in Criminal Justice Systems” 18-20 February 2009 Strasbourg, France

The 9th Informal ASEM Seminar on Human Rights, “Human Rights in Criminal Justice Systems” was held in Strasbourg — a significant centre for human rights dialogue.

The seminar brought together over 120 participants and observers including official government representatives (from foreign affairs ministries, justice ministries), judges, lawyers, non-government organisations, civic associations and the academe, representing 39 of 45 ASEM partners to discuss the integration of human rights standards in criminal justice systems as well as to share experiences and best practices.

This seminar was co-organised together with the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Raoul Wallenberg Institute (delegated by the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs), in cooperation with the European Court of Human Rights, the National Olympic Memorial Youth Center in Tokyo, Japan.

For more information, please contact Ms Sol Iglesias at sol.iglesias@asef.org.

The seminar convened four working groups for an open, direct and in-depth discussion of how to improve human rights protection at the different stages of the criminal justice system. The working groups focused on the rights of the accused during pre-trial procedures and detention, fair trial standards, human rights standards relating to crime and punishment; and rights in prison. After one and a half days of intensive discussions, the results of the working groups were presented to the final plenary session.

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LINGUA COMICA 3 programme in Kyoto, from ASEM countries that participated in the March 2009. The exhibition showcased the LINGUA COMICA 3 project, an exhibition and Linz, Austria 6-8 March 2009 in conjunction with NextComic Festival Linz.

The workshop focused on re-examining the palm oil controversy by connecting different perspectives from social scientists based in a number of European and Asian countries and went beyond a repetition of the pros and cons by adopting a transnational methodology for the analysis framework. These two objectives acted as a “transnational political space.” The focus on these transnational spaces as opposed to the more limited geographical space of the nation state allowed for greater analysis of the connection of the different spaces and the distinct impacts on European and Southeast Asian nations. Discussion and presentations of the workshop will be published by ISEAS in 2010.

The workshop is part of the Asia Europe Workshop Series, a partnership of ASEF and the European Alliance for Asian Studies, with the International Institute of Asian Studies (IIAS) in Leiden acting as the secretariat.

For more information, please contact Ms Grace Foo at grace.foo@asef.org

Participates of the workshop, together with ASEF Deputy Executive Director Amb Nguyen Quoc Khanh (second from left) during the discussions.

LINGUA COMICA RELOADED
Asia-Europe Dialogue through Comics
in conjunction with NextComic Festival Linz
6-8 March 2009 Linz, Austria

Conceived as follow-up activities of ASEF’s LINGUA COMICA 3 project, an exhibition and workshop were held in Linz, Austria, from 6-8 March 2009. The exhibition showcased the process of creative and final work of 16 artists from ASEM countries that participated in the LINGUA COMICA 3 programme in Kyoto, Japan in November 2008. These activities were in conjunction with the NextComic International Festival, with the support of Linz 2009 European Capital of Culture and Arts Electronics Organization.

During the workshop, Paul Gravett, Artistic Director for LINGUA COMICA 2 and Titus Ackermann, Facilitator in LINGUA COMICA 2 and 3 gave lectures about comics and graphic novels in relation to their experience with the projects. Aside from the workshop and exhibition, a comics and animation workshop was given to children, students and general public.

Nale Bronner, an alumni of the LINGUA COMICA also won a prize during the international comics competition during the NextComic Festival Linz 2009 for his comic entitled “Futureplayer”.

For more information, please visit the LINGUA COMICA project blog at http://linguacomica2009.wordpress.com or contact Mr David Ocon at david.ocon@asef.org

ESiA Interim Advisory Group Meeting and Public Seminar
12 March 2009 Macau, S.A.R. China

In partnership with the University of Macao, ASEF organised an interim meeting of the European Studies in Asia (ESiA) Advisory Group, coupled with a public seminar entitled “Asian-EU relations: A Research Agenda”.

The meeting brought together a number of the ESiA Advisory Group members, who were participating in the Network of European Studies Centres in Asia (NESCA) Meeting, which took place in Macao from the 13th to the 15th. In addition to these Advisory Group members, each of the research team leaders from Vietnam, Indonesia and The Philippines were in attendance, joined by high level representatives from the University of Macao and the Asia-Europe Institute, who will represent Macao and Malaysia in the next phase of ‘The EU through the Eyes of Asia’ research project. The cross regional research project to gauge Asian public opinion, media and elite perceptions of the EU is now entering its fourth phase, adding India, Macao and Malaysia to a list that already includes China, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam.

The meeting offered a timely and opportune platform for the ESiA Advisory Group members to discuss ESiA’s future activities and strategy at a pivotal juncture for the Network. The Advisory group formulated recommendations related to the ongoing ‘EU through the Eyes of Asia’ project, publications strategy, the future of the Young Academics Workshop and other new innovative strategies.

The Public Seminar featured some very interesting presentations and discussions on the issue of Asian-EU relations in terms of mutual research interests and policies. The panel included ESiA advisory board members Prof. Sung-hoon Park (Korea University), Prof. Martin Holland (National Centre for Research on Europe (NCRE) - University of Canterbury), Prof. Dai Bingran (Fudan University) and Mr. Peter Ryan (ASEF). The seminar was chaired by Prof. Paulo Canelas de Castro of the Faculty of Law, University of Macao and was attended by over 50 local stakeholders including students and faculty of the University of Macao, Media and ESiA advisory group members.

For more information, please contact Mr Ronan Lenihan at ronan.lenihan@asef.org

For more information, please visit the LINGUA COMICA project blog at http://linguacomica2009.wordpress.com or contact Mr David Ocon at david.ocon@asef.org

“Post Beijing 2008: Geopolitics, Sport, Pacific Rim”
18-20 March 2009 Cork, Ireland

The conference entitled “Post Beijing 2008: Geopolitics, Sport, Pacific Rim” discussed the cultural, political and economic implications of the Beijing Olympics. Different workshops focused on topics such as “Post Beijing 2008: China and Chinese Sport”, “China Post-Beijing 2008: Reflections from Inside and Outside” and “Western Pacific Rim’s responses to the Beijing Olympics”. The event was held from 18 - 20 March 2009, and ASEF’s support facilitated the participation of experts from Asia & Europe in an international conference on the significance of the Beijing Olympics for the geo-political future of the Pacific Rim. 20 experts approached the topics from various perspectives.

This event is part of ASEF’s newly established Economy and Society programme and was organised jointly by the International Journal of the History of Sport (published by Routledge), ASEF, the Irish Institute of Chinese Studies and the Confucius Institute at UCC. Selected papers will be published by Routledge in the forthcoming Global Society edition.

For more information, please contact Ms Natalia Frigge at natalia@asef.org
Religion is, and will continue to be, a powerful element in the tensions and polarization between and within societies with differing cultural and religious values.

This idea was supported by a recently concluded alumni survey of the Dialogue of Cultures and Civilisations programme, which placed religion and interfaith relations at the top of the list of priority issues of Asia-Europe significance. As part of a continuing process of programme renewal and evaluation, the Dialogue of Cultures and Civilisations will thus refocus its activities on religion for the next two years. ASEF kicked off the process with a two-day consultation of selected alumni and new partners to define the programme’s thematic objectives to the region’s continuing efforts in sustaining dialogue and conflict management.

ASEF kicked off the process with a two-day consultation of selected alumni and new partners to define the programme’s thematic objectives to the region’s continuing efforts in sustaining dialogue and conflict management.

ASEF, the International Institute of Asian Studies, the Singapore Institute of International Affairs and the European Institute for Asian Studies launched the Europe-Asia Policy Forum (EUFoR Asia) to contribute to EU policy formulation towards Asia. EUFoR Asia consists of three components: an interactive internet forum (http://www.euforasia.eu), EUFoR Asia Brussels Briefings throughout the year on issues topical to Asia-Europe relations, and a series of workshops/roundtables on environment, regional integration and conflict management.

EUFoR Asia was inaugurated at the European Parliament in Brussels on 29 April, with the first EUFoR Asia Brussels Briefing on “The ASEAN Charter: A Milestone in ASEAN History” featuring the following panelists:

- Ambassador Rosario Manalo, Former Chair of the high-level task force on the drafting of the ASEAN Charter
- Dato’ Deva Mohd. Ridzam, Distinguished Fellow of the Institute of Strategic and International Studies in Malaysia
- Mr. James Moran, Director for Asia, Directorate-General for External Relations, European Commission
- Mr. Xavier Nuttin, Head for Asia, Policy Unit, Directorate-General for External Policies, European Parliament

The panel provided a detailed report of the main features of the Charter as well as insights to the negotiations surrounding the Charter and ASEAN Human Rights Body to an audience of Asian ambassadors to the EU, think tank experts, foundation officials and other Brussels-based Asia-watchers. The sessions were chaired by Mr. Seamus Gillespie, Head of the South-East Asia Unit in the Directorate-General for External Relations of the European Commission and H.E. Mr. Anil Kumar Nayar, Ambassador of Singapore to the European Union. Dr. David Camireux, Senior Lecturer at the Paris Institute of Political Studies, gave a comprehensive summary of the afternoon’s proceedings as panel rapporteur.

Call for Applications
8th Asia-Europe Classroom Network Conference
26-30 October 2009
Sønderborg, Denmark

In collaboration with the Sønderborg Municipality with support from the Danish Ministry of Education, Hanu, Centralskole, Nyborg Fritskole and Herlevskole, the 8th Asia-Europe Classroom Network Conference (AEC-NET) will take place from 26 – 30 October 2009 in Sønderborg, Denmark.

The theme for the upcoming conference is “The Impact of Climate Change and Sustainable Development within the School Community in Asia and Europe”. The conference aims to raise awareness and build environmental awareness for secondary and high schools in Asia and Europe, which will hopefully lead to concrete action to protect the environment in their own school community. In brief, the main elements of the conference are:

- Professional Enrichment for AEC members
- Presentations of AEC Projects, and the presentation of the AEC Awards;
- and Discussion and Development of future AEC Projects

The 8th AEC-NET Conference is open to all teachers and educators from the ASEM countries who would like to propose, or collaborate in ICT projects designed to promote to secondary and high school students in Asia and Europe. To enable them to draw full benefit from the conference, participants need to

- have sufficient knowledge about ICT generally, and ICT applications in learning and training; and
- be prepared to share their experiences and ideas on ICT projects and/or propose project ideas.

Online application is available at http://aeconet.asef.org/register/participate_conference.asp. Closing date for applications is on 31 August 2009. For more information about the Asia-Europe Classroom Network, please visit http://aeconet.asef.org or contact Ms. Angie Toh at angietoh@asef.org.

For more information, please contact Ms Qiuyi Tan at qiuyi.tan@asef.org.
NEW PUBLICATIONS

Asia-Europe Classroom Network (AEC-NET) e-Newsletter
January 2009

The January 2009 issue of AEC-NET’s quarterly newsletter features the upcoming 8th Asia-Europe Classroom Network Conference that took place in Kota Kinabalu on 12 – 16 December 2008. The e-newsletter also features the new AEC Award Winners, the Excellence Awards as well as the AEC projects 2008/2009 that was developed during the course of the conference.

For more information or to subscribe to the e-newsletter, please visit http://aec.asef.org or contact Ms. Angie Toh at info@asef.org

ENVForum Track II Series: Policy Brief: Towards Integrated Adaptation and Mitigation Measures in Agriculture
April 2009

Following the official side event of the Asia-Europe Environment Forum, a policy brief with recommendations resulting from the discussion is now available.

The main message from the side-event was that in order to maintain current levels of agricultural productivity and food supply and at the same time mitigate the effects of climate change, an integrated approach towards adaptation and mitigation measures should be considered since climate change is putting growing pressure to adapt on the agriculture sector to ensure global food security.

To download a copy of the policy brief, please visit the ENVForum subsite at http://www.env.asef.org

Report and Policy Recommendations
Mini-Summit on New Media Arts Policy & Practice
These arose from the Mini Summit on New Media Arts Policy & Practice, held in Singapore in connection with International Symposium of Electronic Art 2008 (ISEA2008), hosted by ASIF, and the International Federation of Arts Councils and Culture Agencies (IFACCA). Recommendations are made to address current needs in local and trans-national media arts practices.

Freedom of Expression
Proceedings of the 8th Informal Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) Seminar on Human Rights

On the occasion of the first meeting of ASEM Foreign Ministers in Singapore in February 1997, Sweden and France had suggested that informal seminars on human rights be held within the ASEM framework. The aim of this initiative was to promote mutual understanding and co-operation between Europe and Asia in the area of political dialogue, particularly on human rights issues. The informal Seminar series is co-organised by the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Raoul Wallenberg Institute (delegated by the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs) and ASIF, which has acted as the Secretariat of the Seminar since 2000.

Supervision of the informal seminar is entrusted to a Steering Committee, composed of the three co-organisers as well as representatives of the ministries of Foreign Affairs of China and Indonesia, as well as the European Commission.

The Asia-Europe Environment Forum is a platform for dialogue and debate on sustainable development issues. It serves as the only multi-stakeholder forum on environment between the two regions, as well as a recognised reference point for Asia and Europe consensus on sustainable development. The Forum acts as an interface between government and civil society for policy recommendations, and as a contributor to the agenda of the ASEM Environment Ministerial and other Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) fora.

The forum was initiated in 2003 by the Asia-Europe Foundation and is co-organised with the Hannes Seidel Foundation of Germany, the Institute for Global Environmental Strategies of Japan and the United Nations Environment Programme. The Swedish Environmental Secretariat for Asia (SENSA) came on board as a co-organiser in 2006 and Korea Environment Institute in 2008.

The 5th Asia-Europe Environment Forum roundtable in Shenzhen, China was held in collaboration with the Research Centre for Urban Development and the Environment, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS) and City Development Centre of Shenzhen Municipality.
Title: Regionalism and Regional Trade Agreements in Asia-Europe trade relations

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Interested in Contributing an Article?

The Journal is devoted to publishing interdisciplinary and intercultural studies and research between Asia and Europe in the social sciences and humanities. Fields of interest include various aspects of bilateral relationships, comparative studies as well as Asian area studies from an European perspective and vice versa.

If you would like to submit a paper, please send your submission in electronic form (Microsoft Word Document) to asiaeuropejournal@asef.org

Papers should be written in English and be preceded by a short abstract. The submission should not exceed 7,000 words. Only previously unpublished manuscripts are accepted for consideration. Upon publication, an honorarium of 300 Euros will be granted.

For further information, please contact Dr. Albrecht Rothacher (Editor-in-Chief) or Ms Leonie Schneider (Editorial Assistant) at asiaeuropejournal@asef.org.

You will also find detailed background information on the journal at the website http://aej.asef.org

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A brief overview of these focus themes follow:

Economy and Society

The global financial crisis topped the agenda of the 7th Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) Summit last October in Beijing. This crisis is expected to have long-term and far-reaching consequences of the social, economic and political impacts on economic policies. At the same time, policies that have gained wide acceptance over the years are now being questioned. Fortunately, ASEM was designed to be comprehensive and multi-faceted, spanning economic but also political and socio-cultural relations. ASEM partners, who comprise 60% of the global GDP, have an influential voice in global efforts to address the crisis.

In tandem with the inter-governmental ASEM dialogue on the crisis, ASEF has taken the initiative to articulate a new strategic focus under the theme “Economy and Society.” Under this theme, ASEF will address the confluence of both economic and social policy in areas that include regional integration, education, migration and artistic reflection. This thematic focus will address the impact of the economic crisis on society, in order to engage government and civil society partners in collective action, and to formulate innovative and integrated policy recommendations, for effective communication to target audiences.

Through such initiatives, ASEF seeks to generate ideas for a “constructive” partnership among inter-governmental bodies and a range of different backgrounds that are all involved with the social consequences of the crisis, but may not have the opportunity to discuss with each other. These include economists & NGO activists, academics & practitioners, business owners & employees, technical experts & artists, international relations & diplomats, as well as finance & social welfare officials. Among the initiatives ASEF has already undertaken are a cluster of activities held in support of the 9th ASEM Foreign Ministers’ Meeting in Hanoi in May 2009. This included a public lecture and journalists’ seminar centred on the financial crisis, as well as a photography exhibition portraying artistic views on economies in the context of the current global economic crisis.

In the lead-up to the ASEM Summit in Brussels in September 2010, ASEF will continue to explore the impact of the crisis on society, in the fields of regional integration, education policy and the arts.
**ASEF Calendar**

**May 2009**
- 11 – 18 May 2009
  - 2009 Regional Cyprus Conflict Seminar
    - Topic: Regional Cyprus Conflict Seminar – Towards a political solution for the Cyprus conflict
    - Location: Athens, Greece

- 19 – 23 May 2009
  - 2009 Regional Economic Cooperation Conference
    - Topic: The future of the field of regional economic cooperation
    - Location: Brussels, Belgium

- 23 – 25 May 2009
  - 12th ASEM Ministerial Conference
    - Topic: Asia-Europe Normalisation and the Next Steps
    - Location: Brussels, Belgium

- 25 – 26 May 2009
  - 8th Asia-Europe Forum (AEF) on Human Rights
    - Topic: The regional human rights agenda
    - Location: Brussels, Belgium

**June 2009**
- 17 – 19 June 2009
  - 10th ASEM Summit
    - Topic: Towards a more integrated Asia-Europe partnership
    - Location: Phnom Penh, Cambodia

- 17 – 19 June 2009
  - 6th Asia-Europe Counter-Terrorism Forum
    - Topic: Counter-terrorism in the Asia-Europe context and its impact on Criminal Justice
    - Location: Istanbul, Turkey

- 17 – 19 June 2009
  - 13th Asian Security Studies Conference (ASSC)
    - Topic: Asia’s security in an uncertain world
    - Location: Kobe, Japan

- 18 – 20 June 2009
  - 2nd Asia-Europe Civil Society Forum
    - Topic: Civil society’s role in promoting a more balanced and sustainable Asia-Europe partnership
    - Location: Brussels, Belgium

- 26 – 27 June 2009
  - 11th ASEM Foreign Ministers’ Meeting
    - Topic: The future of the ASEM partnership
    - Location: Hanoi, Vietnam

- 1 – 5 July 2009
  - 2009 ASEM Secretariat/Ministerial Trip to the Philippines
    - Topic: Enhancing ASEM relations with the Philippines
    - Location: The Philippines

**July 2009**
- 6 – 9 July 2009
  - 13th ASEM Media Forum
    - Topic: Media and the future of Asia-Europe
    - Location: Berlin, Germany

- 6 – 9 July 2009
  - 13th ASEM Media Forum
    - Topic: Media and the future of Asia-Europe
    - Location: Berlin, Germany

- 11 – 13 July 2009
  - 14th ASEM Business Forum
    - Topic: Asia-Europe business and investment opportunities
    - Location: Hanoi, Vietnam

- 19 – 23 July 2009
  - 14th ASEM Ministers’ Meeting
    - Topic: Towards an integrated and sustainable Asia-Europe partnership
    - Location: Copenhagen, Denmark

**August 2009**
- 10 – 12 August 2009
  - 14th ASEM Business Forum – Focus on China
    - Topic: Asia-Europe business and investment opportunities
    - Location: Beijing, China

- 18 – 21 August 2009
  - 19th ASEM Young Volunteers Exchange (AEYVE)
    - Topic: Strengthening the Asia-Europe partnership through youth engagement
    - Location: Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

- 21 – 27 August 2009
  - 2009 ASEM Secretariat/Ministerial Trip to South Korea
    - Topic: Enhancing ASEM relations with South Korea
    - Location: South Korea

- 29 – 31 August 2009
  - 15th ASEM Foreign Ministers’ Meeting
    - Topic: The future of the Asia-Europe partnership
    - Location: Athens, Greece

- 5 – 12 September 2009
  - 10th ASEM summit
    - Topic: Towards a more integrated Asia-Europe partnership
    - Location: Ljubljana, Slovenia

**September 2009**
- 9 – 12 September 2009
  - 11th ASEM Foreign Ministers’ Meeting
    - Topic: Towards an integrated and sustainable Asia-Europe partnership
    - Location: Helsinki, Finland

- 9 – 12 September 2009
  - 11th ASEM Foreign Ministers’ Meeting
    - Topic: Towards an integrated and sustainable Asia-Europe partnership
    - Location: Helsinki, Finland

- 14 – 17 September 2009
  - 13th ASEM Media Forum
    - Topic: Media and the future of Asia-Europe
    - Location: Berlin, Germany

- 16 – 19 September 2009
  - 15th ASEM Foreign Ministers’ Meeting
    - Topic: Towards an integrated and sustainable Asia-Europe partnership
    - Location: Ankara, Turkey

**October 2009**
- 27 – 30 October 2009
  - 2009 ASEM Secretariat/Ministerial Trip to Malta
    - Topic: Enhancing ASEM relations with Malta
    - Location: Malta

- 27 – 30 October 2009
  - 2009 ASEM Secretariat/Ministerial Trip to Malta
    - Topic: Enhancing ASEM relations with Malta
    - Location: Malta

**November 2009**
- 6 – 9 November 2009
  - 14th ASEM Business Forum
    - Topic: Asia-Europe business and investment opportunities
    - Location: Hanoi, Vietnam

- 6 – 9 November 2009
  - 14th ASEM Business Forum
    - Topic: Asia-Europe business and investment opportunities
    - Location: Hanoi, Vietnam

- 15 – 17 November 2009
  - 15th ASEM Foreign Ministers’ Meeting
    - Topic: Towards an integrated and sustainable Asia-Europe partnership
    - Location: Hanoi, Vietnam

- 15 – 17 November 2009
  - 15th ASEM Foreign Ministers’ Meeting
    - Topic: Towards an integrated and sustainable Asia-Europe partnership
    - Location: Hanoi, Vietnam

- 23 – 26 November 2009
  - 16th ASEM Foreign Ministers’ Meeting
    - Topic: Towards an integrated and sustainable Asia-Europe partnership
    - Location: Phnom Penh, Cambodia

- 23 – 26 November 2009
  - 16th ASEM Foreign Ministers’ Meeting
    - Topic: Towards an integrated and sustainable Asia-Europe partnership
    - Location: Phnom Penh, Cambodia

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**FOCUS**

**ASEF’s New Strategic Direction**

ASEF is pleased to announce that our new strategic direction has been launched. This strategic direction sets out the key priorities and goals for the next five years, focusing on areas such as education, culture, and security. The strategic direction aims to strengthen and expand the ASEF network, fostering greater collaboration and cooperation between Asia and Europe. The new strategic direction will guide ASEF’s work over the next five years, ensuring that ASEF remains relevant and effective in promoting mutual understanding and cooperation between Asia and Europe.