

## **Recommendations for Organizational and Management Strategy and Long Term Financial Sustainability of ASEF**

(October 6, Hanoi, ASEM Senior Officials' Meeting)

At the Fourth Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM4) held in 2002, ASEM leaders urged ASEM partners to adopt the necessary measures to ensure ASEF's long-term sustainability before the next Summit. At the Fifth ASEM Foreign Ministers' Meeting in 2003, the Ministers requested ASEF to provide further cost and benefit analysis as well as management strategy for ASEF's long-term financial sustainability and mandated SOM to follow up this issue for adoption at the Hanoi Summit. At the sixth ASEM Foreign Ministers' Meeting in 2004, the Ministers requested the Board of Governors of ASEF to submit proposals on the future of ASEF to ASEM Senior Officials for consideration and approval prior to submission to the Hanoi Summit.

After careful considerations of the "ASEF Sustainability (ASEF Board of Governors, Berlin, May 2003)", the supplementary paper submitted by the Executive Office of ASEF on cost-benefit analysis, "Asia Europe Foundation's Strategy and its Long Term Financial Sustainability (The van der Geest-Macaranas Report)" and the "Comments by the Board of Governors on the Study Report (Van der Geest-Macaranas Report)", SOM leaders agreed on the following recommendations for adoption by the leaders. Accordingly the Dublin Principles should be revised as attachment A.

### Organizational and management strategy

1. Align ASEF more closely to the ASEM process through providing information and analysis of the ASEM process to a key audience through suitable intellectual exchange, people-to-people, cultural exchange and public relations/information projects. In particular, in the run-up to the biennial ASEM Summits, ASEF should place more emphasis on implementing major projects to highlight the importance and implications of the ASEM process.
2. The relations between ASEF Governors and ASEM SOM leaders should be strengthened by the following arrangements.
  - (1) A meeting between the Board of Governors (BOG) Chairman, the ASEF Executive Director (ED) and the ASEM Coordinators or SOM leaders should be arranged as and when the SOM leaders deem it necessary. ASEF may request such a meeting for consideration by the SOM leaders.
  - (2) The ED shall be invited, to attend a SOM and submit budgetary reports and brief on its activities. The decision to invite the ED shall be made at the Coordinators' Meeting preceding the SOM in which the ED is expected to submit budgetary reports and brief on its activities.
  - (3) The ASEM SOM leader of the host country of a BOG meeting, or his/her representative, should be invited to attend the meeting as an observer.
3. The Dublin Principles and the logical framework for ASEF were reviewed and it was found that it should give greater priority to implementation of projects assigned by ASEM Leaders or ASEM Ministerial Meetings, with a view to making ASEF even more effective to further substantiating the co-operation between Asia and Europe.
4. The ASEF's Executive Office and the Governors should be reminded that ASEF has

accountability to the contributing countries for explaining a policy of its activities.

Long Term Financial Sustainability

1. The ASEM partners reaffirmed that contribution to ASEF must be continued voluntarily. The partners duly take note of the call by the ASEF Executive Director for the continuous and more active contributions in order to sustain ASEF activities and the recommended formula for contribution in the “ASEF Sustainability (ASEF Board of Governors, Berlin, May 2003).”
2. Annual budget should not be considered as fixed at a certain amount. The budget should be continuously and critically reviewed to achieve cost-effectiveness by implementing applicable recommendations made in the Van der Geest-Macaranas Report.
3. To ensure cost-effectiveness across programmes and projects, a professional senior manager to act as the Foundation’s Chief Financial Officer (CFO) should be introduced as a staff member. Such a staff member can be made available by an ASEM partner.
4. While acknowledging an important role of BOG meetings to publicize ASEF activities in various countries, it is important to hold the meetings cost-efficiently. Hence, it is encouraged to limit the representatives from the ASEF Executive Office only to the ED, Deputy ED and the CFO when a BOG meeting is held outside of Singapore.

## **Dublin Agreed Principles of the Asia Europe Foundation**

### Purpose, Areas of Interest and Functions

1. The Purpose of the Foundation is to promote better mutual understanding between Asia and Europe through greater intellectual, cultural and people-to-people exchanges, in line with the vision for Asia-Europe cooperation as laid down by the ASEM leaders at their meeting in Bangkok from 1-2 March 1996 as well as at their subsequent meetings.
2. In pursuit of this purpose, the Foundation should seek to add value by:
  - (a) organizing projects closely linked with ASEM activities in collaboration with relevant Asian and European institutions of the ASEM countries;
  - (b) implementing any project assigned by future meetings of ASEM leaders or Ministers and the relevant member of the European Commission.
  - (c) acting as a clearing house, catalyst and facilitator;
  - (d) organizing a few flagship projects of its own;
  - (e) conducting public relations activities to profile ASEM, and publicize ASEM meetings, seminars and other activities; and
  - (f) giving grants.
3. The Foundation should avoid duplicating existing and future bilateral and multilateral exchanges between Asia and Europe in the three core areas of its work, as stated in paragraph 1 above, and should seek where possible to build on and promote further development in the activities of existing networks working in these areas.

### Participation

4. Participation in the Foundation shall be open to ASEM partners having taken part in the first ASEM in Bangkok in March 1996, as well as to any new partner joining the ASEM process.
5. Intellectual, cultural and other relevant institutions and non-governmental organizations of the ASEM partners, working in the three core areas of the Foundation's mandate, will be eligible to apply to the Foundation for assistance.

### Funding for the Foundation

6. The Foundation will establish an operating fund and an endowment fund.
7. The Foundation shall be entitled to solicit and accept contributions for either of these funds from member governments and their institutions, as well as from private corporations, foundations or individuals.

8. Fair and balanced contributions of all partners, which are important for the long-term financial sustainability of the Foundation, should be made on a voluntary basis by the governments of ASEM partners and the European Commission.
9. Any moneys received in the operating fund in excess of the annual budget of the Foundation shall be transferred to the endowment fund, which shall also receive any contributions specifically earmarked for this purpose.

#### Legal Capacity

10. The Foundation shall be incorporated under Singapore's domestic law as a not-for-profit corporation with tax exempt status. It will have the legal capacity to contract, acquire and dispose of movable and immovable property, and be party to legal proceedings.

#### Governance

11. The Foundation will be governed by a Board of Governors. Each participant will designate one Governor for a period of three years. The Board will meet at least once a year and more often, if necessary. The Board will, at its first meeting, formally adopt a statement of the Foundation's purposes, objectives and procedures. The Board will likewise draw up its own rules of procedure. It may appoint an Advisory Committee and any other committee as may, in its view, be necessary for the performance of the Foundation's functions.
12. The Board of Governors shall elect its own Chairman and Deputy Chairman for a period of one year. If the Chairman is an European, the Deputy Chairman shall be an Asian, and vice versa. The first Chairman and Deputy Chairman shall be elected by the Board at its first meeting, on the basis of nominations made at the ASEM Foreign Ministers' Meeting on 15 February 1997.
13. The Board of Governors will be responsible for determining the Foundation's policies, programmes and priorities. The Board of Governors shall also be responsible for ensuring the efficient use of the Foundation's resources, for the approval of the Foundation's annual report, its proposed budget and workplan for the coming year. In the exercise of their responsibilities, members of the Board will have regard to the interest of the ASEM as a whole.
14. The Executive Director shall have meetings with the ASEM SOM leaders for consultation when necessary in order to ensure that the ASEF annual work programme is coherent with the ASEM official work programme. The Foundation shall also submit financial reports and other documents directly to the ASEM partner governments.

#### Staffing

15. The staff of the Foundation shall be headed by an Executive Director. The Executive Director will be a citizen of an ASEM country. He shall be appointed by the Board of Governors for a term of four years. The Executive Director will be responsible to the Board for the administration of the Foundation and the implementation of its policies and programmes. The Foundation will be represented by the Executive Director.
16. The Executive Director will be assisted by a Deputy Executive Director who will be a citizen of an ASEM country, appointed by the Board for a term of four years.
17. If the Executive Director is an Asian, the Deputy Executive Director will be an European, and vice versa.
18. The Executive Director will recruit such professional, secretariat and other staff essential for carrying out the policies and programmes of the Foundation. The Executive Director will also seek the secondment of such staff where appropriate, including a Chief Financial Officer to ensure cost-effectiveness across programmes and projects, reporting and auditing in accordance with international standards.

#### Accounts

19. The accounts of the Foundation shall be maintained according to normal principles of good practice, and shall be audited by an external auditor appointed by the Board whose reports shall be submitted to the Board.

19 December 1996

Amended on 6 October 2004, Hanoi