

ASEM 4 – Chairman’s Statement

Copenhagen, September 22-24, 2002 (ASEM 4)

The fourth Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM 4) was held in Copenhagen on 23-24 September 2002. The Summit was attended by the Heads of State and Government of ten Asian and fifteen European nations and the President of the European Commission, with the Prime Minister of Denmark acting also as President of the Council of the European Union.

Leaders, recalling their previous Summits in Bangkok (1996), London (1998) and Seoul (2000), held comprehensive, in-depth and fruitful discussions on a variety of issues of common interest and concern. Leaders noted with satisfaction the progress made in the ASEM process on the basis of the principles agreed on at previous Summits and set out in the Asia-Europe Cooperation Framework (AECF 2000).

Leaders noted with appreciation the positive outcomes of Foreign, Economic and Financial Ministers’ Meetings in 2001 and 2002, as well as the meetings of Environment Ministers and Ministers in charge of managing migratory flows, and endorsed their recommendations.

Political dialogue on the challenges of the 21st century

Leaders took the general international security situation as their point of departure and had a broad-based and forward-looking discussion of the new security challenges in the aftermath of the tragic events of September 11.

Leaders underlined their resolve to fight international terrorism, while taking into account the multiple reasons leading to the emergence of terrorism. They pledged to work closely together to combat this threat to global peace and security, sustainable economic development and political stability, and emphasised that the fight against terrorism must be based on the leading role of the United Nations and the principles of the UN Charter. To this end, Leaders adopted the ASEM Copenhagen Declaration on Cooperation against International Terrorism and the ASEM Copenhagen Cooperation Programme on Fighting International Terrorism, as annexed. Leaders also endorsed the initiative to hold an ASEM Seminar on Anti-terrorism.

Drawing on the positive experience of the consultative meeting of ASEM partners in the margins of the United Nations General Assembly, Leaders agreed that ASEM partners should continue this political dialogue, and decided to establish an ad hoc informal consultative mechanism enabling ASEM Coordinators and Senior Officials to confer expeditiously on significant international events.

Unity in diversity

Leaders underlined that September 11 has clearly demonstrated that the ASEM process, encompassing peoples of various cultures and from different civilizations, is an asset in international relations that merits further development. In this spirit, Leaders held for the

first time a retreat session under the heading "Dialogue on Cultures and Civilizations". The dialogue was conducted on the basis of respect for the equal dignity of all civilizations and the conviction that cultural diversity is an asset. Leaders emphasised that the already existing constructive bi-regional discourse in ASEM should serve to promote unity in diversity.

The importance of education, narrowing of the digital divide and equal access to information were deemed crucial in overcoming and preventing pre-conceived opinions, stereotypes and prejudices among present and future ASEM generations. To this end, they pledged to continue this useful exchange at future meetings, tasked Ministers with developing further the dialogue on cultures and civilizations at all levels of ASEM cooperation, and endorsed a follow-up ASEM Conference on Cultures and Civilizations at the political level. Leaders invited ASEF to continue contributing to this dialogue through publications focused on these issues.

Ministers were also requested to collaborate in organising the first ever "ASEM Youth Games". Such an event will foster further people-to-people contacts and raise mutual awareness and understanding between the two regions.

Leaders welcomed a proposal to organise a meeting in the framework of ASEM in Athens in connection with the ARTIADE ATHENS 2004 Olympic Games of the Visual Arts.

Leaders proposed to study the possibility of establishing a connection between the annual European Capitals of Culture and Asian counterparts.

Recent regional developments

Leaders were informed about the latest developments on the Korean Peninsula. They adopted the ASEM Copenhagen Political Declaration for Peace on the Korean Peninsula, as annexed, thereby reaffirming their support for the peaceful process of inter-Korean reconciliation and cooperation. In this regard, Leaders welcomed the progress recently made towards realising a number of projects for inter-Korean cooperation. They took note that the re-establishment of the railway links could eventually lead to a Trans-Eurasian railway (the "Iron Silk Road"). This link would have positive effects on the region-to-region exchanges.

Leaders also discussed the Iraq issue and the situation in the Middle East.

Leaders took note of perspectives for EU enlargement and the resulting positive outlook for the world economy.

Asian Leaders commended the European Union for the successful introduction of the Euro and expressed their interest in the role of the Euro as a major reserve, transaction and reference currency.

Leaders took note of the progress made by Asian partners in their regional cooperation, such as ASEAN+3 and the Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD).

Closer economic partnership

Leaders addressed economic and financial priorities in the context of the global economic situation and reiterated their firm intention to revitalise their economies after the transitory shock of September 11. They sent a strong political signal confirming their commitment to enhance economic relations between the two regions, thereby contributing to achieving sustainable growth in the world economy.

Leaders expressed their undiminished commitment to a strong, open, transparent and fair multilateral trading system, and agreed that the WTO work programme launched at Doha represented a unique opportunity to promote economic growth to the benefit of their societies. They stressed their commitment to ensure balanced progress on all issues under the Doha work programme, and underlined that the development dimension and the needs of the developing countries should continue to be a central component. Leaders agreed that further trade liberalisation and the strengthening and further development of WTO rules should go forward together in a mutually reinforcing manner, so as to stimulate economic growth, enhance predictability, manage the challenges of globalisation and support sustainable development. Leaders endorsed the support expressed at the fourth ASEM Economic Ministers' Meeting regarding the acceleration of Vietnam's WTO accession.

Leaders appreciated the progress in increasing mutual understanding and transparency, the overcoming of barriers to trade and investment between the two regions, achieved through the implementation of the Trade Facilitation and Investment Promotion Action Plans during the past two years, as well as the new goals agreed for the future. Furthermore, they recognised that the ASEM process constitutes an effective means for consultation and dialogue on the WTO Doha Round, particularly in the run-up to the WTO ministerial meeting in Cancun in 2003. Leaders therefore welcomed as a new initiative a flexible framework for consultation and dialogue on economic issues launched by Economic Ministers at their fourth meeting, i.e. two rounds of consultations on the Doha Development Agenda by WTO experts, an ASEM Symposium on Multilateral and Regional Economic Relations as well as an ASEM High-Level Conference on Agricultural Cooperation. In addition, they endorsed a workshop on Building Market Systems in the Context of Globalisation.

Reviewing developments concerning economic integration in their respective regions, Leaders expressed their desire to deepen economic cooperation between Asia and Europe. Following the successful conclusion of the Doha Development Agenda, region-to-region cooperation should be enhanced, including through new steps aimed at furthering economic integration between the two regions. Leaders underlined that closer economic links and the enhancement of the information and communication technology cooperation among ASEM partners, such as the Trans-Eurasia Information Network, form the basis of a strong partnership between Asia and Europe.

Leaders agreed to work towards a closer ASEM economic partnership. To this end, they tasked ASEM Coordinators to set up an action-oriented Taskforce. Taking into account work already carried out within the ASEM economic pillar, this Taskforce should consider three areas: Trade, Investment and Finance. These areas could include issues such as creation of a Eurobond market in Asia and use of the Euro as an international currency. The Taskforce should consist of five experts from each of the two regions. Leaders requested that an interim report be prepared for submission to Foreign, Economic and Finance Ministers in 2003, with a view to submitting a final report to ASEM 5.

Human resources development, social cohesion and environmental cooperation

Leaders addressed adverse consequences of globalisation. They stressed the importance of human resources development and education as factors for employability and alleviation of poverty and encouraged increased educational exchange to foster mutual understanding between the two regions. They welcomed the broadening of the ASEM-DUO Fellowship Programme and encouraged expansion of educational exchange among ASEM partners by building on this and other such initiatives. Leaders endorsed an ASEM Seminar on Educational Exchange aimed at collecting and disseminating information on ASEM-wide exchange schemes.

In view of the interplay between economic growth and progress in the social sphere, and in order to ensure long-term social cohesion, Leaders endorsed an ASEM Workshop on the Future of Employment and the Quality of Labour.

In addition, Leaders endorsed an initiative on Asia-Europe Cooperation in Promoting Awareness in the Young Generation of the Drug Problem.

Leaders underlined the importance of the ASEM dialogue on environmental matters leading up to the next ASEM Environment Ministers' Meeting in 2003. They reaffirmed their political will to implement the commitments made at the World Summit on Sustainable Development and welcomed the new international targets on sanitation, energy, sustainable consumption and production, chemicals and biodiversity. Leaders also reaffirmed their commitment to address climate change and stressed the need for further action within the framework of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Kyoto Protocol.

Deepening ASEM cooperation

Leaders affirmed that the relations between Asia and Europe had become closer, more extensive and more important than ever, and that ASEM has entered a new stage of dynamic development. They committed themselves to deepening understanding, expanding common ground and to further enhancing cooperation.

Leaders noted with satisfaction the results of the many ASEM activities and initiatives carried out since ASEM 3 as reported to the Summit. Appreciating the very informal,

substantive and interactive discussions at this Summit, Leaders looked forward to continuing the ASEM process in a deepened and broadened manner. They agreed that the fight against international terrorism and transnational organised crime, closer economic partnership, cooperation in the social, educational and environmental fields as well as dialogue on cultures and civilizations are among the foremost priorities among the upcoming activities listed in the ASEM Calendar 2002-2004, as annexed.

Leaders appreciated the important work carried out by the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF) to foster people-to-people, cultural and intellectual exchanges. They urged ASEM partners to adopt the necessary measures to ensure ASEF's long-term financial sustainability before the next Summit.

Leaders accepted with gratitude Vietnam's offer to host ASEM 5 and looked forward to meeting again in 2004.

Copenhagen, 24 September 2002