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## **Europe and Asia – Shaping globalization together by Dr Frank-Walter Steinmeier, Foreign Minister of the Federal Republic of Germany**

When we Europeans think of Asia these days, we think of rapid change and racing growth. We sense that developments in Asia impact our lives in Europe and in Germany more and more, whether in terms of climate and the environment, the availability of energy and raw materials or indeed the labour market, education and research.

Asia is a locomotive of globalization. Yet, Asia is not driving globalization alone. We in Europe are also part of this development. For this very reason, we have to shape globalization together with Asia. That is why I am very much looking forward together with my European colleagues to welcoming the new ASEM members India, Pakistan, Bulgaria, Romania, Mongolia and the ASEAN Secretariat into ASEM cooperation at the 8th Asia Europe Meeting (ASEM) at foreign ministers level, to be hosted by the German EU Presidency next week in Hamburg.

Over the last two years, ASEM has almost doubled its membership from 26 to 45 and at the same time deepened cooperation on "new topics" such as energy and climate change, labour and employment as well as education and research. This is a welcome development which underlines that ASEM is a dynamic process geared to the future. Within this framework, politics can react flexibly and pragmatically to the current situation. A glance at the range of topics to be discussed in Hamburg shows the extent to which international and global developments make cooperation paramount even today. I expect a further signal of our shared responsibility to emerge from the ASEM Meeting. Our priority in Hamburg is to win over the new ASEM partners for committed cooperation in this unique process.

The ASEM Meeting in Hamburg is one of the largest events during Germany's EU Presidency. This also proves the importance the EU attaches to cooperation with Asia. Javier Solana, the European Union's High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy, will also attend an ASEM Meeting for the first time, thus highlighting ASEM's growing security policy dimension.

One of our most important tasks is to shape political, economic and social developments in Europe and Asia to benefit both sides. Part of this is, for example, securing conditions for fair competition and sustainable economic activity. Just recently, in early May in Brunei, Trade Commissioner Mandelson and the ASEAN economic ministers agreed to launch negotiations on a free trade agreement. Negotiations with South Korea and India are to follow. Social policy aspects are definitely to be included.

In all these questions, we can see that foreign policy is increasingly becoming global governance. ASEM is the forum where we sound out the scope we have when it comes to jointly shaping the rules of the international system. Responsible action on the part of Europe and Asia is key. We want to win Asia as a partner for a policy geared to peace, justice and sus-

tainable economic activity. In this way, Europe and Asia will be able to secure their future together.