



SUMMARY REPORT

ASEM workshop on Enhancing ASEM Visibility through Cultural Activities *(28th – 29th April 2010, Ha Long City, Viet Nam)*

1. The ASEM Workshop on Enhancing Visibility through cultural activities took place in Ha Long City, Quang Ninh Province in Viet Nam on 28-29th of April 2010. The Workshop was a joint initiative by Viet Nam, Hungary and the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF). It brought together over 100 participants from ASEM, including senior government officials, NGOs representatives and other cultural experts of relevant organizations from ASEM members, as well as representatives from ASEF and UNESCO in Viet Nam. Representatives from Australia and Russia also attended the event as guests of the host.

2. Taking stock of the richness, the diversity and the long history of cultural exchanges between ASEM countries, the participants agreed that the promotion of joint activities in the field of cultural cooperation are essential means and the best ways to overcome ignorance and prejudice and to further promote mutual understanding and tolerance among and between people in Asia and Europe.

3. The Workshop discussed the following issues: (i) Cultural diplomacy in the ASEM framework; (ii) The role of associations and NGOs in the cultural dialogue and cultural cooperation within the ASEM framework; (iii) ASEF's role and contributions to the enhancement of visibility of cultural dialogue in the ASEM process; (iv) Recommendations towards enhancing the visibility of ASEM.

4. The principle findings of the Workshop were:

- The **paradigm shift in cultural diplomacy** towards greater people to people activities, multilateral projects and the building of longer term relationships;
- The **key role of** associations, NGOs and other stakeholders in ASEM projects and programmes;
- An increasing focus on **programmes and projects with a wider relevance** to major issues in today's societies including those related to **social, economic and environmental issues**;
- A growing importance of **local and regional authorities** in ASEM cultural cooperation;
- That **cultural diversity** is an asset and resource for enhancing mutual understanding and fruitful cooperation between the people of ASEM member countries.

5. The participants agreed on the following recommendations:

- a. ASEM governments should reiterate the importance of the **Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF)** as the main facilitator and reference platform of cultural interactions between Asia and Europe, providing ASEF with the appropriate financial support, thereby contributing to promote ASEM's visibility.
- b. Because of the role of culture in today's societies including international relations, the **coordination between Ministries** of Culture, Education, Foreign Affairs and other relevant Ministries should be enhanced in order to identify possible synergies and grounds for collaboration in a more comprehensive and integrated way.
- c. To activate already existing networks and facilitate the set up of **networks** of professionals in the cultural sectors **in Asia** in order to enable balanced exchange between Asia and Europe.
- d. The build up of an open and transparent analysis of **national cultural policies** for the benefit of decision makers, the media and the cultural sector in the format of initiatives such as the 'Open compendium of cultural policies and trends' and Unesco framework for cultural statistics.
- e. ASEM can gain visibility through its actions and projects, with a coordinated **communications strategy** including traditional media and new interactive media.
- f. **Online platforms** such as culture360.org should be supported as a repository of information and good practice exchange on Asia-Europe cooperation as well as a means to enhance the relationship with and between the ASEM/ASEF stakeholders.
- g. Existing International **festivals and exhibitions** should be supported to provide a platform for cultural and intellectual exchange of values, ideas and shared experiences.
- h. Administrative and regulatory obstacles should be eased to enhance the mobility of artists and works of art.
- i. The Action plan agreed upon at the ASEM CMM in 2005 should be further implemented into concrete actions with the appropriate financial support.

6. The outcome of the Workshop should be considered as an initial contribution by officials and cultural experts of ASEM members, and as a start for a more concerted dialogue on visibility through cultural diplomacy and cultural cooperation.

7. Recommendations of the Workshop will be submitted to the ASEM Culture Ministers' Meeting in Poznan, Poland (7-9 September 2010) and the ASEM 8 Summit in Brussels, Belgium (4-5 October 2010).

8. The participants expressed their thanks for Viet Nam's hospitality and congratulated Viet Nam, Hungary and ASEF on the successful conclusion of this important event.

Ha Long City, 29 April 2010