



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



Brussels, 30 October 2008
14776/08 (Presse 304)

**Chair's Statement of the Seventh Asia-Europe Meeting
Beijing, 24-25 October 2008**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I.	Statement of the Seventh Asia-Europe Meeting on the International Financial situation	2
II.	Beijing Declaration on Sustainable Development	4
III.	Chair's Statement of the Seventh Asia-Europe Meeting	13

P R E S S

I. STATEMENT OF THE SEVENTH ASIA-EUROPE MEETING ON THE INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL SITUATION

1. Leaders attending the Seventh Asia-Europe Meeting had an in-depth discussion on the current international economic and financial situation and its trend of development. They expressed concern over the impact of the spreading international financial crisis on the global economy and in particular, the severe challenges it poses to financial stability and economic development of countries in Asia and Europe.
2. Leaders believed that authorities of all countries should demonstrate vision and resolution and take firm, decisive and effective measures in a responsible and timely manner to rise to the challenge of the financial crisis. Leaders expressed full confidence that the crisis could be overcome through such concerted efforts.
3. Leaders welcomed the measures adopted by countries and organizations to ensure the smooth running of the financial system and real economy. They called on the international community to continue to strengthen coordination and cooperation and take effective and available economic and financial measures in a comprehensive way to restore market confidence, stabilize global financial markets and promote global economic growth.
4. Leaders agreed that IMF should play a critical role in assisting countries seriously affected by the crisis, upon their request.
5. Leaders were of the view that to resolve the financial crisis it is imperative to handle properly the relationship between financial innovation and regulation and to maintain sound macroeconomic policy. They recognized the need to improve the supervision and regulation of all financial actors, in particular their accountability.
6. Leaders called on all countries to pursue responsible and sound monetary, fiscal and financial regulatory policies, enhance transparency, inclusiveness, strengthen oversight, and improve crisis management mechanisms so as to maintain their own economic development and the stability of the financial markets. They agreed that the necessary and timely measures should be taken to preserve the stability of the financial system.

7. Leaders pledged to undertake effective and comprehensive reform of the international monetary and financial systems. They agreed to take quickly appropriate initiatives in this respect, in consultation with all stakeholders and the relevant international financial institutions. The International Monetary Fund and other international financial institutions should bring into play their mandated role in the international financial system, to help stabilize the international financial situation.
8. Leaders supported the convening of an international summit on 15 November in Washington D.C. to address the current crisis and principles of reform of the international financial system as well as long-term stability and development of the world economy.
9. Leaders agreed to make full use of ASEM and other cooperation mechanisms to enhance information sharing, policy exchange, and pragmatic cooperation on supervision and management in the financial sector and effectively monitor, prevent and respond to financial risks to ensure sustained, stable and sound economic growth.

II. BEIJING DECLARATION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

1. We, Heads of State and Government from sixteen Asian countries, twenty-seven member states of the European Union, the President of the European Commission and the Secretary General of ASEAN, gathered in Beijing on 24 and 25 October 2008 for the Seventh Asia-Europe Meeting.
2. Recognizing that challenges posed by increasing global population, environmental degradation, rapid resource depletion and weakening ecological carrying capacity have become more prominent in many countries and regions, and that it is a grave challenge as well as pressing task for humanity to achieve sustainable development. ASEM partners are willing to strengthen cooperation in a mutually beneficial manner and work towards win-win solution so as to make positive contribution to sustainable development;
3. Reiterating that sustainable development bears on the present and future of mankind, the very existence and development of all nations, world peace and prosperity; and that all nations should, whilst pursuing economic development, strive to maintain environment quality and take full account of the needs of future generations;
4. Realizing that economic development, social progress and environmental protection are three mutually reinforcing and interdependent pillars of sustainable development, and emphasizing that Internationally Agreed Development Goals and particularly the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), climate change and energy security, social cohesion are issues calling for special attention in achieving sustainable development;

5. Reaffirming the need for the full implementation of the objectives, principles and action plans identified in the Rio Declaration and Agenda 21 adopted at the UN Environment and Development Conference, the Monterrey Consensus of the International Conference on Financing for Development, Bali Road Map adopted at the 13th COP of the UNFCCC, as well as the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation adopted at World Summit on Sustainable Development;
6. Recalling that ASEM 6 has identified sustainable development, in particular the MDGs, climate change, environment and energy as key policy areas of ASEM for action of the next decade.

Decide to issue the following declaration:

I. The Millennium Development Goals

7. We reaffirm that the MDGs and the Johannesburg targets underpin international cooperation for sustainable development, welcome on-going efforts made by ASEM partners in achieving the MDGs and other IADGs thus far and recognize the grave challenges in achieving the MDGs as scheduled globally.
8. Noting with concern that rising food prices upset global poverty reduction efforts and impede eradication of extreme poverty and hunger, we call for fully coordinated response and comprehensive strategy to tackle this issue in an integrated manner from a short to medium and long term, and through practical cooperation to stabilize commodity markets. We call for increased development cooperation in support of agricultural production, trade facilitation, and technology transfer. We call on all partners to increase sustainable agricultural productivity and grain production, reduce market-distorting agricultural subsidies and to expand investment in agriculture and rural development, create more job opportunities for low-income earners and raise their income level so as to effectively reduce hunger and poverty and to ensure food security.
9. We recognize that there is still a long way to go in achieving IADGs, and in particular the MDGs. We welcome the substantive discussion and consensus at the United Nations High-Level Event on the MDGs in September, and urge all partners to demonstrate greater political will and take concrete actions to strictly fulfill their commitment so as to promote the achievement of the MDGs as scheduled globally.

10. We reaffirm the commitment to establishing a genuine global partnership for development cooperation and stress the leading role of the United Nations in coordinating international development cooperation and building the international consensus on sustainable development matters. We recognize that the timely achievement of IADGs, in particular the MDGs should involve extensively all sectors and encourage civil society and the business sector to play an active part in this endeavour. In this context, we stress the importance of a gender based approach towards development. We emphasize that it is the primary responsibility of each nation to achieve its own development, complemented by an enabling international environment for development. We call on developed countries to increase resources for development and fulfill the commitment of achieving the overall target of using 0.7% of their gross national income (GNI) by 2015 for official development assistance and raise aid effectiveness. We stress ASEM serves as an important complement to efforts at the global level to enhance the global partnership for development, including through intergovernmental and multisectoral initiatives.
11. We emphasize that financing for development is an important element for achieving the MDGs and that the international community should implement the Monterrey Consensus expeditiously. We look forward to the substantive progress to be made for international cooperation on development financing at the Follow-up International Conference on Financing for Development to be held in Doha, Qatar 2008.

II. Climate Change and Energy Security

12. We reaffirm that the issue of climate change should be dealt with within the framework of sustainable development. We reaffirm that in order to achieve sustainable development, it will be necessary to combat global climate change in accordance with the ultimate objective of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). We recognize the importance of the assessment reports of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change in particular its fourth Assessment Report.

13. We emphasize that the UNFCCC and the Kyoto Protocol are the main channels for international negotiations and cooperation in climate change, reaffirm the commitment to the objectives, purposes and principles of the UNFCCC and the Kyoto Protocol, particularly the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities. We recognize that ASEM partners share a mutual commitment to finding a long-term multilateral solution to climate change under the UNFCCC and the Kyoto Protocol framework. We welcome the decisions of the Bali Action Plan, containing all the elements for an ambitious, effective and comprehensive agreed outcome for long term cooperative action now, up to and beyond 2012 for strengthening international cooperation on addressing climate change and are committed to the completion of negotiations by 2009.
14. Recognizing the importance of tackling climate change, we affirm that developed countries should continue to show strong leadership and take measurable, reportable and verifiable nationally appropriate mitigation commitments, including quantified emission limitation and reduction objectives, including through sectoral approach, where appropriate, as a tool to implement them, and provide financial support and technology transfer to developing countries. Developing countries will take nationally appropriate mitigation actions in the context of sustainable development, supported and enabled by technology, financing and capacity-building, in a measurable, reportable and verifiable manner, with a view to achieving a deviation from business as usual emissions.
15. We highlight the need for a shared vision for long term cooperative action, including a long term global goal for emission reductions, to achieve the ultimate objective of the Convention and to enable its full effective and sustained implementation, in accordance with the provisions and principles of the Convention, in particular, the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, and taking into account economic and social conditions and relevant other factors. We further stress that, for this shared vision to be credible, it requires all developed countries to take the lead by committing to ambitious and comparable legally binding emission reduction targets. We call upon the international community to consider most ambitious set of targets reflected in the 4th Assessment Report of the Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change.

16. We recognize that actions to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, and to enhance carbon sinks through the promotion of afforestation and reforestation, sustainable forest management, sound land use and sustainable production and consumption patterns and appropriate measures against illegal logging and associated trade, can make an important contribution to reducing greenhouse gases emission and to preserving biological diversity. We also reaffirm our support of the decisions taken in Bali for achieving policy approaches and positive incentives to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, and the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks in developing countries.
17. Recognizing that adaptation to climate change is vital to address the effects of inevitable climate change and adverse impacts of climate change that affect all countries, especially developing countries, and in particular the least developed countries (LDCs) and small island developing countries, we emphasize that ASEM partners should work together in accordance with their UNFCCC commitments to strengthen the ability of developing countries to adapt to climate change, including vulnerability assessment, prioritization and implementation of adaptation actions, financial needs assessments, technical assistance, capacity-building, risk management and strategies, and mainstreaming adaptation into development policies and strategies.
18. We affirm the critical role of technology, the need for technological cooperation and technology transfer to developing countries. We will work together on technology cooperation in specific economic sectors, promote the exchange of mitigation information and analysis on sectoral efficiency, the identification of national technology needs and voluntary, action-oriented international cooperation, and consider the role of cooperative sectoral approaches and sector-specific actions, consistent with the Convention. We urge enhanced action on technology development and transfer to support action on mitigation and adaptation, to accelerate development, deployment, diffusion, dissemination and transfer of affordable technologies for adaptation and mitigation. We welcome cooperation on research, development, demonstration and deployment of current, new and innovative clean technology, including win-win solutions. We stress that technology cooperation with and transfer to developing countries is a key enabling condition for them to tackle climate change.
19. Noting that addressing climate change requires greater mobilization of public and private financial resources, both domestically and internationally, we support efforts to scale up financial support to developing countries. We also support the creation of incentives for the developing countries to enhance implementation of national mitigation and adaptation strategies and action, and to promote public and private sector funding and investment.

20. Noting with serious concern that the extreme weather conditions caused by climate change have inflicted immense loss of life and property on ASEM members, we call on all partners to implement the decisions made at ASEM 6 by strengthening information exchange systems on natural disaster management and exploring the possibility of establishing early warning mechanisms.
21. We underline the need to act with resolve and urgency during the Climate Change Conference in Poznan, Poland, in 2008 and work towards an ambitious, effective and comprehensive agreed outcome for long term cooperative action now, up to and beyond 2012 at the Climate Change Conference to be held in Copenhagen, Denmark at the end of 2009.
22. We recognize that climate change is interrelated with energy and should be addressed in integrated manner, with full consideration of the issues of safeguarding energy security, improving energy mix and raising energy efficiency and saving. We support the further exploration of a safe and sustainable low-carbon development path and its integration into sustainable development policies.
23. We reaffirm that energy security is closely related to the stable growth of world economy and sustainable development of all nations, and emphasize that each nation has the right to promote its own development by fully utilizing energy and resources in a sustainable way, while taking into account the carrying capacity of ecosystems and the protection of regional environment. We encourage ASEM partners to strengthen mutually beneficial cooperation in development and utilization of energy and make contribution to safeguarding global energy security. We welcome the convening of the first ASEM Ministerial Meeting on Energy Security that will take place in Brussels in the first half of 2009. We also welcome the convening of the follow-up to the Jeddah Summit on Energy Security in London in December 2008.
24. We call for diversification, sustainability and security of sources of energy supply.
25. We call upon all members to improve energy savings and efficiency, optimize energy consumption structure, develop and utilize renewable and clean energy, including sustainable biofuels while not affecting food security or causing environmental damage and promote transfer, deployment and dissemination of advanced environmentally sound energy technology to developing partners.

26. We stress the need to combine energy cooperation with poverty reduction and environmental protection, to help developing countries, especially the LDCs strengthen infrastructure development, reduce poverty and achieve sustainable development by increasing their access to energy. We recognize the importance of strengthening the role of UNEP in environmental protection.
27. Sharing serious concerns over the evolution and current level of oil prices, we stress that joint efforts should be made by all partners to contribute to the stability, transparency and predictability of oil markets.

III. Social Cohesion

28. Recognizing that an equal and inclusive society must combine economic growth, social development and environmental concerns through integrated strategies and policies, we stress that sustainable development and social cohesion are mutually supportive, and it is through sustainable development that the wealth of society will be increased, people's lives and human rights will be improved and respected, and social equity and justice will be guaranteed.
29. We stress that the ASEM partners share a common interest in strengthening social cohesion through coherent dialogue and cooperation, thus effectively contributing to a sustainable social dimension of globalization. We recognize the challenges facing ASEM partners in narrowing wealth gap, maintaining social harmony while taking into account the cultural diversity, job creation, health care and social security against the backdrop of globalization and agree to strengthen collaboration to ensure benefit for all in globalization, and to work together in promoting social cohesion. We welcome the results of the ASEM Labor and Employment Ministers' Conferences held in Germany and Indonesia and the outcomes of the 1st ASEM Social Partners Forum held in Brussels.
30. Recognizing the importance of social justice to social cohesion, we emphasize that universal access to education must be ensured. We emphasize that more efforts should be made by ASEM partners to invest in human capital and optimal utilization of human resources, provide basic education, extend the coverage and improve the quality of secondary and higher education, promote professional and vocational education and enhance lifelong learning for everyone.

31. We recognize that promotion of full and productive employment and decent work for all is crucial to safeguard and improve people's livelihood, realize effective social cohesion and achieve MDGs. We note that well designed employment and social policies, good governance as well as full respect and effective implementation of core labour standards set out in the 1998 ILO Declaration on the Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and the 2008 ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalisation are contributing positively to inclusive economic and more cohesive societies, providing everyone, including the vulnerable people, with opportunities to enjoy decent work, better living conditions, access to social and health services, universal access to basic social security system, as well as health and safety at work. We recognize the need for social protection systems, to provide social security and support labour-market participation. We emphasize that achieving a fair distribution of incomes is of great relevance to social cohesion. We welcome the strengthening of the ILO's capacity to promote the Decent Work Agenda and ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization. We underline the key role that good industrial relations and effective social dialogue based on mutual trust and shared objectives can play for sustainable development and management of change. We encourage ASEM partners to strengthen mutually beneficial cooperation in the labour, employment, and social fields. We welcome and support the activities and projects recommended in the Bali Declaration on More and Better Jobs-Strategic Cooperation and Partnership to promote decent work and global labour markets to our mutual benefit which was adopted at the 2nd ASEM Labor and Employment Ministerial Meeting held in Indonesia in October 2008.
32. We note that ensuring social cohesion and mitigating economic and social imbalances, within and among countries, sound, adequate and sustainable social protection, consumer safety and social security systems covering both formal and informal sectors within urban and rural areas are needed. We emphasize the importance of self-reliance and mutual cooperation of local communities.
33. We recognize that international migration provides shared benefits, can help solve demographic and labour market challenges faced by ASEM partners and achieve sustainable development, especially in developing countries. Noting that the integration of migrants is an important factor in realizing social cohesion, we call on ASEM partners to develop a comprehensive approach on migration, including the promotion of legal migration, effectively addressing irregular migration, as well as the link between migration and development. It should also explore possibilities to develop cooperation with one another on international migration through policy dialogue, development cooperation, and the pursuit of mobility partnerships. We stress the importance of the forthcoming Second Global Forum on Migration and Development to be held in Manila, the Philippines in October 2008 in support of the effective management of migration.

34. Recognizing population ageing has become a grave challenge facing both developed and developing countries, we stress that goals, objectives and commitments identified in the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, 2002 and the related regional strategies are to be met by ASEM partners.
35. Recognizing that harmony between man and nature is part of social harmony, ecological civilization is an important building block for social cohesion and that eco-cities represent the trend for environmentally-friendly and resource-conserving culture, we welcome the initiative of ASEM Eco-City Network proposed by China and encourage ASEM partners to take an active part in it.
36. We recognize that corporate social responsibility is related to, inter alia, environmental protection, labour and human rights, risk assessment, corporate governance and community development and therefore encourages all ASEM partners to promote corporate social responsibility at both national and international level. We encourage businesses to voluntarily undertake social responsibilities, complying with respective national conditions and international norms and laws and contribute to fostering a prosperous, harmonious and socially responsible business environment.

Conclusion

37. We reaffirm to be guided by the principles and objectives on sustainable development set by the United Nations and the consensus reached in this area within the framework of ASEM. We welcome existing ASEM initiatives on sustainable development and encourage ASEM partners to conduct more activities for implementation of this declaration.

III. CHAIR'S STATEMENT OF THE SEVENTH ASIA-EUROPE MEETING

1. The Seventh Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM 7) was held in Beijing on 24 and 25 October 2008. The Summit was attended by the Heads of State and Government of sixteen Asian and twenty-seven European nations, the President of the European Commission and the Secretary-General of ASEAN Secretariat. The President of the People's Republic of China, H.E. Hu Jintao addressed the opening ceremony. The Premier of the People's Republic of China, H.E. Wen Jiabao chaired the meeting.
2. The Meeting was the first gathering of the leaders of 45 members of ASEM since its second round of enlargement. They represent around 50% of world GDP, approximately 58% of the world's population and 60% of world trade. A warm welcome was extended to the leaders of Bulgaria, India, Mongolia, Pakistan, Romania, and the ASEAN Secretariat who attended ASEM Summit for the first time.
3. Leaders of ASEM members held in-depth discussions on important international and regional issues of common concern and interest under the overarching theme of Vision and Action: Towards a Win-Win Solution.
4. Leaders reaffirmed the strategic importance of ASEM, and recognized that Asia and Europe are closely related geographically, historically and culturally, share many common ideals, are complementary in economic and social development and rich in cultural diversity. They recognized the high expectations placed on ASEM by their peoples, and emphasized the need to further strengthen Asia-Europe dialogue and cooperation on the basis of equal partnership, mutual respect, mutual benefit, seeking common grounds while shelving differences and learning from each other, which will bring about development opportunities and tangible benefits to both regions and be conducive to peace, stability and development.
5. Leaders expressed their deep condolences and sympathy over the recent severe human and property losses incurred in natural disasters in Asia in the past year. They affirmed their commitment to continued assistance to the affected countries. They stress the importance of efficient and prompt delivery of humanitarian aid and expertise in case of natural disasters. Leaders highlighted the need for joint global efforts to address global challenges including natural disasters in a timely manner and undertook to conduct practical disaster preparedness and management and reconstruction cooperation in the areas of infrastructure, agriculture, health, water, environment, education, science and technology, with a view to promoting regional and national capacity building in disaster preparedness and management.

6. Leaders reaffirmed their commitment to promoting peace and security, sustainable development and human rights in accordance with the UN Charter and principles of International Law. Leaders, in marking the 60th Anniversary of Universal Declaration of Human Rights, reaffirmed their commitment to the principles contained therein.

Promoting Political Dialogue

7. Leaders reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening multilateralism and a multilateral international system with the United Nations at its core based on international law. They underlined that international institutions provide both a means of cooperation and a mechanism through which to deliver change, and should adequately address the global challenges, ensuring global security and working for global prosperity. With regards to UN and other international institutions reforms, leaders recognized the need to work in partnership to achieve more democratic, more accountable, more efficient, and more effective international institutions in the face of new challenges. They also reiterated their support to peaceful resolution of international disputes through political and diplomatic efforts.
8. While condemning terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, leaders reaffirmed their commitment to take practical steps to prevent and combat terrorism with reference to the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, underlining the need to adhere to the major UN conventions and protocols dealing with terrorism and to respect international laws, including the Charter of the United Nations, Human Rights law, refugee law and international humanitarian law, in the global fight against terrorism. Calling for expeditious finalization of a Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism at the UN, they expressed their appreciation with the outcome of the formal review of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy held in New York on 4/5 in September 2008 and the existing dialogue and cooperation on counter-terrorism within ASEM and welcomed the outcomes of the ASEM Conference on Counter-Terrorism in Tokyo, Japan (2007) and Madrid, Spain (2008). Leaders also welcomed the offer of the Philippines to host the 7th ASEM Counter-Terrorism Conference in 2009.

9. Leaders had in-depth exchanges over international and regional situation. The Leaders discussed and evaluated the current development of situations in Asia and Europe, and agreed that the prevailing hope of the Asian and European peoples is promoting peace, development and cooperation. The peoples of Asia and Europe are dedicated to dialogue and cooperation so as to enhance strategic mutual trust, create enabling regional security environment and commonly address conventional and nonconventional security threats. They supported the progress of the integration process of East Asia, ASEAN and South Asia, and welcomed the signing of the ASEAN Charter including the proposed creation of an ASEAN Human Rights Body and the delivery of the ASEAN Economic Community Blueprint. They discussed the development of European Union's integration process and acknowledged that since its inception, this process had promoted peace, stability and development in Europe.
10. Leaders had exchanged views on recent developments on the Korean Peninsula. They positively confirmed and supported the Six-Party Talks and welcomed the progress made in the second-phase actions for the full and balanced implementation of the Joint Statement of the Six-Party Talks unanimously adopted on 19 September 2005. They agreed that these developments contribute to the peace and stability of Northeast Asia. They called on the relevant parties to continue to take positive steps to move forward the Six-Party Talks with the aim of early and verifiable denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula in a peaceful manner. They also emphasized the importance of addressing the humanitarian concerns.
11. Leaders stressed their commitments to promote peace, stability and development in Afghanistan and emphasized their support to Afghanistan's national reconciliation, unity and territorial integrity. They welcomed the progress of the reconstruction achieved so far and the International Conference in Support of Afghanistan held in Paris last June and the final declaration issued. They expressed the support to the full implementation of the Afghanistan Compact and the Afghanistan National Development Strategy. Leaders vowed to contribute to the fulfilment of the aims of the agreement to strengthen institutions, good governance and anti-corruption efforts to promote the rule of law and the respect of human rights. They emphasized that the international community should assist Afghanistan in these regards, and help combat narcotics cultivation of and trafficking in drugs in Afghanistan and its neighbors. They welcomed the key role played by the United Nations in the reconstruction process, and stressed the support to deepening the regional cooperation and dialogue on the issue of Afghanistan. They also expressed their appreciation for the international efforts in combating terrorism in Afghanistan.

12. Leaders exchanged views on developments in Myanmar. They expressed their unanimous support for the good offices role of the UN Secretary General. The Leaders acknowledged the progress achieved in assisting the post-Nargis relief work by the Tripartite Core Group (TCG) comprising Myanmar, the UN and ASEAN, and the assistance provided by the international community to those in need. They expressed the support to the United Nations to continue to play a constructive role and to the ASEAN-led mechanism to continue its good performance in coordinating the ongoing relief and recovery efforts in Myanmar. The Leaders took note of the briefing by Myanmar on the recent developments and prospects. They noted the recent visit to Myanmar last August by the UN Secretary-General Special Advisor Ibrahim Gambari and supported the UN to continue its good offices efforts, and they encouraged the Myanmar Government to conduct closer cooperation with the UN. They also encouraged the Myanmar government to engage all stakeholders in an inclusive political process in order to achieve national reconciliation and economic and social development. In this regard, they called for the lifting of restrictions placed on political parties and early further release of those under detention.
13. Leaders confirmed their commitment to seek a negotiated solution to the Iranian nuclear issue, addressing their serious concerns about Iran's nuclear programme. They called on Iran to comply fully with UN Security Council resolutions and to meet fully and without delay the requirements of the IAEA Board of Governors. They welcomed the offer of a road-map of the resumption of negotiations proposed by China, France, Germany, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom and the United States in June 2008 and called on relevant parties to seize this opportunity for the resumption of negotiations.

Advancing Economic Cooperation

14. Leaders discussed the current international economic and financial situations and recognized that the current global financial crisis has severe impact on the global financial system and world economy. The international community should jointly overcome the financial crisis through enhanced cooperation. The leaders agreed to issue the Statement on the International Financial Situation.
15. Leaders reiterated their commitment to strengthening economic and development cooperation and coordination, raising capabilities to address various risks and challenges and promote fair and balanced progress of economic globalization which benefits all. Concerned about the development of the least developed countries, leaders stressed the importance of debt relief and debt sustainability.

16. Leaders reaffirmed the importance of an open, fair, rule-based and stable multilateral trading system under the World Trade Organizations (WTO) to achieve economic growth and development, and to reduce global disparities and trade imbalances, recognizing that such a system is the most effective way in promoting trade liberalization and expanding and diversifying trade relations and increasing economic opportunities among ASEM partners.
17. Leaders were concerned over the current situation of the Doha Round negotiations of the WTO and expressed the conviction that an early and successful conclusion of the Doha Development Agenda would bring benefits to all members, especially developing and the least developed countries. They remain deeply committed to pushing for successful conclusion of a comprehensive, ambitious and balanced Doha outcome, recognizing the central importance of its development dimension. Leaders reaffirmed their full support for ASEM members' universal membership to the WTO and thus for early accession of Lao PDR into the WTO.
18. Leaders recognized that each country has the primary responsibility for its own development and stressed national development need to be supported by an enabling international economic environment. They called upon all countries to actively implement the internationally agreed development goals including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and looked forward to a substantive outcome of the Follow-up International Conference on Financing for Development to be held in Doha at the end of November 2008 and noted the importance of Accra Agenda for Action of the 3rd High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness held in Accra in September 2008. Leaders stressed their commitment to mobilize additional development finance through increased official development assistance (ODA), debt relief, where appropriate, and innovative financing mechanisms towards the attainment of the MDGs. Leaders welcomed the recent success of the replenishment of the Asian Development Fund, which contribute to regional development. They also welcomed the holding of a Conference on Development Cooperation in the Philippines in 2009.

19. Leaders expressed their concern over fluctuation of commodity prices worldwide especially of oil and food, since they pose a serious challenge to stable growth and cause great difficulties to the life of people in many countries, especially the most vulnerable. They called for strengthened efforts including food aid and social protection activities, and trade facilitation to stabilize the surging food prices quickly, mitigate their impact and help the affected developing countries, especially the least developed countries get through this challenging time. They expressed their commitment to taking joint and comprehensive measures to address the crisis in the medium to the long run, including strengthening policy coordination and cooperation, increasing sustainable input in agricultural production, raising agricultural productivity, in a bid to secure food supply. To coordinate and implement these measures effectively, leaders called for the formation of a global partnership involving all actors, including governments, the private sector, civil society and other international institutions. In this connection, they highly appreciated Vietnam's initiative on the first ASEM Forum on Food Security in 2009. They affirmed their support to the United Nations in playing a leading and coordinating role in this regard, and expressed the support to the outcomes of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) High-Level Conference on World Food Security in Rome. Leaders also look forward to the upcoming Follow-up High Level Conference that will be held in Madrid later this year. In addition, they also confirmed the importance of advancing research and development of agricultural technology, particularly on enhancement of agricultural productivity.

20. Leaders recalled the Hanoi Declaration on a Closer ASEM Economic Partnership (CEP) and reiterated that ASEM partners should strengthen cooperation and join hands to deepen economic partnership, promote open trade and boost two-way investment, further develop a conducive business environment and offer sustainable trade opportunities to all ASEM partners, especially the developing and the least developed countries. In this regard, they urged the Economic Ministers to convene the meeting at the earliest possible time to review past performance and implementation of the CEP and identify concrete areas and activities for practical and effective cooperation in the coming years. They emphasized the importance of implementing activities within the Trade Facilitation Action Plan (TFAP) and the Investment Promotion Action Plan (IPAP) and better engaging the business community in the ASEM process, especially via the Asia-Europe Business Forum. Furthermore, they stressed the need to revitalize links among ASEM investment focal points to bring the economic pillar forward in a more substantive and comprehensive manner. Leaders also recognized the value of bilateral and regional trading arrangements, consistent with the WTO's rules and commitments, and noted progress in the negotiations between ASEM partners.

21. Leaders recognized that, although structural reforms and sound macroeconomic policies have increased the resilience of both Europe and Asia against the global financial turmoil, the global economic slowdown and persistently high commodity prices, both regions are increasingly being affected by the worsening global environment. They agreed that long term stability of the global and regional financial markets is key to sustainable economic growth of both regions. They welcomed the consensus on the necessity of strong and coherent policy responses to recent economic difficulties and mutual cooperation among ASEM partners in the areas of economic integration, infrastructure finance and microfinance in the form of sharing information and knowledge, capacity building, reached at the 8th ASEM Finance Ministers' Meeting held in Jeju, Korea in June 2008.
22. Leaders agreed on the need to enhance cooperation in the fields of innovation, science, and technology among ASEM partners so as to narrow the digital divide and ensure sustainable development. Leaders called for reinforced efforts to protect intellectual property rights and ensure their enforcement. They noted that protection and enforcement of intellectual property rights should contribute to the promotion of technological innovation in and to the transfer and dissemination of technology to developing countries, which is vital for sustainable development. Leaders also supported enhanced cooperation between the government, business, and the international institution on the advancement of ICT to facilitate economic integration and international cooperation in the reduction of tariff barriers, enabling open access, and the promotion of International Standard.
23. Leaders reiterated the importance of closer cooperation among small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to economic development and job creation, and welcomed the consensus reached and action plans adopted at the inaugural ASEM SMEs Ministerial Meeting held in Beijing in October 2007. Leaders also welcomed the recommendations on promoting SMEs development made by the business community at the ASEM SME Trade and Investment Fair in Qingdao in October 2007.
24. Leaders welcomed the recommendations from the 11th Asia-Europe Business Forum on promoting trade and investment between Asia and Europe.

25. Leaders welcomed the initiative of Lithuania to host the first ASEM Transport Ministerial Meeting on 19-20 October 2009 as the platform for launching ASEM dialogue on transport issues between partners and the initiative of Romania to host a first ASEM Ministerial Meeting on Migration in 2009 which will deepen the dialogue on this important issue.

Driving Sustainable Development

26. Leaders held extensive and in-depth discussions on issues of realizing the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) as well as the sustainable development targets agreed in Johannesburg, strengthening energy security cooperation, jointly addressing the challenge of climate change, and environmental protection, including water resources, forests and air, and improving social cohesion under the framework of sustainable development.
27. Leaders stressed the importance of mid-term review of the MDGs, and underscored the need for ASEM members to further deepen international development cooperation to meet the IADGs, particularly the MDGs, in a timely manner.
28. Leaders expressed their support for strengthened international cooperation on climate change that could help assess impacts and vulnerabilities, build adaptive capacities, and support adaptation actions. Recalling the ASEM 6 Declaration on climate Change, leaders noted with satisfaction the outcomes of the ASEM 3rd Environment Ministers' Meeting held in Copenhagen in April 2007 as well as the ASEM Seminar on the Adaptation to the Climate Change held in Japan in October 2008. In this context, leaders welcomed the substantial progress made at the Climate Change Conference in Bali, Indonesia in December 2007. They confirmed their commitment to securing an ambitious, effective and comprehensive agreed outcome now, up to and beyond 2012 by the end of 2009 on the basis of the Bali Road Map and underlined the need to act with resolve and urgency during the Climate Change Conference in Poznan and the Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen.
29. Leaders also emphasized the need for the sustainable management of forest and ocean as well as other territorial, coastal and marine ecosystems. In this respect, leaders also welcomed the offer by Brunei Darussalam to host a workshop on understanding the impact of climate change on the biodiversity of tropical rainforests in 2009. ASEM leaders agreed to encourage and support regional and sub-regional organizations to develop cooperative projects entailing specialized studies on bio-diversity, melting of glaciers and protection of life-sustaining water resources as well as raising mass awareness through dissemination of expertise and technology.

30. Leaders stressed the need to focus on development needs and environmental sustainability in the energy sector. They emphasized the need for Asia-Europe cooperation to ensure the availability of environmentally sound energy at a reasonable price to support economic growth and that the latest technology should be intended to increase energy efficiency. Leaders recognised the need to develop regional and subregional projects amongst ASEM partners to promote low-carbon economy. Leaders acknowledged the key message on sustainable energy from the 6th Asia-Europe Environment Forum.
31. Leaders recognized that the impact of globalization is increasingly being felt by the people of ASEM members, and share a common interest in strengthening the social dimension of globalization and improving social cohesion. They welcomed the outcome of the 2nd ASEM labour and employment ministers' declaration issued at the ministers' meeting in Bali earlier this month and highlighted the importance of decent work and good governance.
32. To this end, leaders unanimously agreed to issue the Beijing Declaration on Sustainable Development.

Furthering Social and Cultural Exchanges

33. Leaders reaffirmed the respect for cultural diversity and the need to protect our cultural heritage and advocated mutual understanding, tolerance, respect and peaceful coexistence among different social systems, development paths and cultures. Leaders welcomed the valuable contributions made since the last meeting at the global level to bridge the gap between cultures and civilisations. They emphasized the importance of combining the multilateral framework with the national efforts to promote the understanding among faiths, cultures and peoples. They welcomed the results of the 1st Alliance of Civilisations (AoC) Forum held in Madrid in January 2008 and the consolidation of this UN Initiative and the increasing number of ASEM countries that have joined its Group of Friends. The UN AoC implementation of concrete projects in the field of media and youth employment, and the elaboration of National Action Plans, show the way ahead to promote global understanding involving civil societies.
34. Leaders reaffirmed the positive role of dialogue among cultures and civilizations in reducing poverty, realizing social peace, preventing regional conflicts, protecting the environment and promoting sustained economic growth, social development and common prosperity. They resolved to take concerted action to further promote interfaith understanding and exchanges, taking global leadership in working towards building a world where different cultures and civilizations co-exist in harmony, equality and mutual respect.

35. Leaders noted with satisfaction the outcome of the ASEM Culture Ministers' Meetings (CMM) held in China, France and Malaysia. They welcomed the progress achieved to enhance cultural exchanges and cooperation between Asia and Europe inspired by the ASEM Declaration on Dialogue among Cultures and Civilizations adopted in 5th ASEM Summit in Hanoi, and welcomed the decision to convene the meeting on a regular basis as well as the recommendation that a Cultural and Art Festival proposed by China be held in connection with ASEM Summits or ASEM CMM. They expressed the desire for more results-orientated discussions during the next Culture Ministers' meeting in Poland in 2010. They reaffirmed their determination to respect, protect and promote cultural diversity and the equal dignity of all cultures, and therefore encouraged the expeditious ratification and implementation of the UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions by all ASEM countries. Leaders also noted that tourism could contribute to mutual understanding and respect for cultural diversity. In this connection, they welcomed the outcome of the ASEM Tourism Forum held in Vietnam this year.
36. Leaders emphasized the importance of keeping the good momentum of the ASEM Interfaith Dialogue and welcomed the outcomes of the ASEM Interfaith Dialogues (Nanjing 2007 and Amsterdam 2008) and urged governments to actively facilitate interfaith and intercultural dialogues, particularly at the regional and interregional levels, which is part of a much broader dialogue between Asia and Europe. In this regard, they underlined the need to intensify discussions among themselves and with other regional organizations and fora on further institutionalizing interfaith dialogue at regional and global levels.
37. Leaders welcomed the constructive role of parliaments, NGOs and the civil society in promoting dialogue among cultures and civilizations and mutual understanding between people of Asia and Europe.
38. Leaders recognized that human resources development constitutes a key factor in poverty reduction and economic and social development. They renewed their commitment to further strengthen their cooperation in human resources development, capacity building and sustained dialogue and exchanges in primary and higher education, vocational training and lifelong learning. Leaders endorsed the outcome of the First ASEM Education Ministerial Meeting held in Germany and looked forward to a substantive outcome of the Second ASEM Education Ministerial Meeting to be held in Vietnam in 2009. Leaders recognized the success of the Trans-Eurasia Information Network (TEIN) in fostering research collaboration between all ASEM partners, welcomed the launch of TEIN3 and renewed their commitment to its long-term sustainability.

39. Leaders expressed their appreciation of the dialogue carried out by ASEM partners through the informal ASEM Seminars on Human Rights, held annually since 1998. They underlined their commitment to cooperate in the promotion and protection of human rights on the basis of equality and mutual respect.
40. Leaders affirmed their commitment to promote global health security including developing health-care systems and local infrastructure to improve public health in the developing world and reiterated their determination to combat health threats such as HIV/AIDs and avian influenza. Leaders welcomed the ASEM Workshop on Avian Influenza Control hosted by China and the ASEM Initiative for the Rapid Containment of Pandemic Influenza financed by Japan and looked forward to the success of the ASEM workshop on sharing experiences of preparedness to respond to the global climate change and emerging diseases to be held in Vietnam in 2009.
41. Leaders commended the Asia-Europe Foundation for its positive contribution to promoting cultural, intellectual and people-to-people exchanges between Asia and Europe. Leaders recognized the value of ASEF's flagship programmes in furthering the priorities, and enhancing the visibility of ASEM. They also commended ASEF for spearheading the development of Culture 360, an Asia-Europe cultural web-portal to enhance art and cultural exchange among ASEM member countries.

The Future of ASEM

42. The Future of ASEM Leaders reaffirmed the role of ASEM as a multi-faceted dialogue facilitator and the key cooperation areas identified in the Helsinki Declaration on the Future of ASEM for its second decade. They adopted various cooperation initiatives put forward by partners (attached as Annex I) and the ASEM Work Program for 2008-2010 (attached as Annex II).
43. With the increasing number of initiatives and meetings at various levels in ASEM, Leaders reaffirmed the importance of developing effective ways of communication within ASEM members to support ASEM cooperation in the near future.
44. Leaders applauded progress made in the institutional building of ASEM, including the Issue-based Leadership initiative (attached as Annex III) and closer coordination among embassies/permanent representations of ASEM partners as agreed at ASEM 6.

45. Leaders tasked Senior Officials to further explore ways to achieve greater visibility of ASEM and welcomed European Commission's efforts in this regard and Vietnam's initiative on the first SOM Meeting on "Coordinating Cultural Activities for the Enhancement of ASEM Visibility.
46. Leaders instructed the Ministers of Foreign Affairs to discuss the issue of enlargement in their future meetings.
47. Leaders accepted with gratitude Belgium's offer to host ASEM 8 and looked forward to meeting again in 2010.

List of New Initiatives for ASEM 7

Austria

UN/ASEM UN-SPIDER Expert Meeting: The Contribution of Space-based Solutions to Sustainable Communities

Brunei

Workshop on Understanding the Impact of Climate Change on the Biodiversity of Tropical Rainforests

China

ASEM Eco-City Network

ASEM Culture and Art Festival

Promoting Asia-Europe Trade Security and Facilitation

ASEM Cooperation on Capacity Building of Disaster Relief

EC

ASEM Conference on the Role of Finance in Economic and Rural Development: Experiences in Asia and Europe

Italy

ASEM Seminar on New Technologies for Demining and Human Security

Korea

ASEM Forum on the Green Growth and SMEs

Pakistan

Eurasian Land Bridge Seminar

Romania

Meeting of the ASEM Ministers of Interior on Irregular Migration

Program for Training of Trainers in the Field of Border Management and Security dedicated to the ASEM Member States

Singapore

ASEM Seminar on Energy Security and Climate Change

Thailand

ASEM interfaith Cultural Youth Camp Project

Vietnam

Coordinating Cultural Activities for the Enhancement of ASEM Visibility

ASEM Workshop on Sharing Experiences on Preparedness to Response to Global Climate Change and Emerging Diseases

ASEM Forum on Food Security

ASEM Work Programme for 2008-2010 2008**2008**

PROGRAMME	VENUE	DATE
ASEM Senior Officials' Meeting	Bled&Brdo,Slovenia	2-3 March
Joint Conference EU-ADB: European and Asian Integration: Achievements and Challenges	Brussels, Belgium	10 March
ASEM SOM on Education/Training	Bonn, Germany	10-11 March
6th ASEM Counter Terrorism Conference	Madrid, Spain	3-4 April
1st ASEM Forum on Energy Security Policy	Hanoi, Vietnam	11-12 April
ASEM Senior Officials' Meeting on Trade and Investment(SOMTI)	Maribor, Slovenia	15-16, April
3rd ASEM Culture Ministers' Meeting	Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia	21-24 April
ASEM Forum on Rural Development	Beijing, China	22-24, April
1st ASEM Ministerial Meeting on Education and Qualification	Berlin, Germany	5-6, May
1st ASEM Labour and Employment SOM(SLOM)	Geneva, Switzerland	3-4 June
4th ASEM Interfaith Dialogue	Amsterdam, Netherlands	3-5 June
Asian ASEM Senior Officials' Meeting	Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei	12-13 June
ASEM Finance Deputies' Meeting	Jeju Island, Korea	15 June
ASEM Conference-Asia, Europe and the Future of Regional Economic Integration	Jeju Island, Korea	15 June
8th ASEM Finance Ministers' Meeting	Jeju Island, Korea	15-18 June
ASEP 5 (Asia-Europe Parliamentary Partnership Meeting)	Beijing, China	18-20 June
ASEM Youth Dialogue 2008: Second Asia-Europe Youth Interfaith Dialogue	Bandung, Indonesia	23-27 June
ASEM Senior Officials' Meeting	Beijing, China	29-30 June
1st ASEM Social Partners Forum	Brussels, Belgium	30 June-1 July
Open-Ended Working Level Meeting on ASEM 7 Documents	Jakarta, Indonesia	29-30 August
Asia Europe Tourism Forum	Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam	10-11 September
ASEM Forum on Trade & Investment in Marine Fishery	Yantai, China	23-24 September

ASEM Coordinators' Meeting	Paris, France	26 September
ASEM Seminar on the Adaptation to the Climate Change	Tokyo, Japan	2-3 October
2nd ASEM Labour and Employment Ministers' Conference	Bali, Indonesia	14-16 October
Asia-Europe Business Forum	Beijing, China	21-24 October
ASEM Roundtable Meeting for Investment Promotion Agencies	Nanning, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, China	22-23 October
ASEM 7 Summit	Beijing, China	24-25 October
7th ASEM Immigration Directors' Meeting	France	2nd half
ASEM Workshop on Digital Divide/ICT for Development	Laos	8-9 December
ASEM Conference: Cultural Diversity-the Asian Experience	Vietnam	15-16 December
ASEM Training on Empowering Local Community in Use of ICT	Indonesia	tbc
ASEM Cooperation of Research and Development on ICT in Strengthening Research Institutions	Indonesia	tbc

2009

PROGRAMME	VENUE	DATE
9th ASEM Informal Seminar on Human Rights	Strasbourg, France	February
ASEM Interfaith Cultural Youth Camp Project	Thailand	February
ASEM Seminar on New Technologies for Demining and Human Security	Italy	5-6 March (tbc)
1st ASEM Ministerial Conference on Energy Security	Brussels, Belgium	30 March tbc
ASEM Conference on Corporate Social Responsibility for the well-being of ASEM workforce	Germany	April
ASEM Conference on Development Cooperation	Philippines	20-21 April (tbc)
ASEM Culture and Art Festival	China	April/May
9th ASEM Foreign Ministers' Meeting (FMM)	Hanoi, Vietnam	25-26 May
Program for Training of Trainers in the Field of Border Management and Security Dedicated to the ASEM Member States	Romania	May/June
Workshop on ASEM Cooperation on Capacity Building of Disaster Relief	China	1st half

ASEM Forum on Food Security	Vietnam	1st half
UN/ASEM UN-SPIDER Expert Meeting: the Contribution of Space-based Solutions to Sustainable Communities	Austria	1st half
ASEM Seminar on Energy Security and Climate Change	Singapore	2nd quarter
Meeting of the ASEM Ministers of Interior on Irregular Migration	Romania	2nd quarter
Workshop on Understanding the Impact of Climate Change on the Biodiversity of Tropical Rainforests	Brunei	July/December
1st ASEM Ministerial Meeting on Cooperation in Transport	Vilnius, Lithuania	19-20 October (tbc)
ASEM Workshop on Sharing Experiences on Preparedness to Response to Global Climate Change and Emerging Diseases	Hanoi, Vietnam	4th quarter
Deforestation and Factors Influencing It in the Context of Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT)	Brussels, Belgium	2nd half
ASEM Workshop on Corporate Social Responsibility for the Well-being of ASEM Workforce	Asia	2nd half
ASEM Eco-City Network	China	Launched in 2nd half
Coordinating Cultural Activities for the Enhancement of ASEM Visibility	Vietnam	2nd half
ASEM Conference on “The Role of Finance in Economic and Rural Development: Experiences in Asia and Europe”	Asia	2nd half
ASEM Conference on Sustainable Consumption and Production	Asia	tbc
1st ASEM Interior Ministers Meeting on Border Security and Associated Risks	Romania	tbc
2nd ASEM Education Ministers' Meeting	Hanoi, Vietnam	tbc
ASEM Finance Deputies' Meeting	Spain	tbc
5th ASEM Interfaith Dialogue	Korea	tbc
Promoting Asia-Europe Trade Security and Facilitation Initiative	China	tbc
Eurasian Land Bridge Seminar	Pakistan	tbc
2nd ASEM Small and Medium Enterprises(SMES) Ministerial Meeting	Europe	tbc

8th ASEM Customs DG-Commissioner Meeting	Europe	tbc
Seminar on Biofuels Standards	Philippines	tbc
7th ASEM Counter-Terrorism Conference	Philippines	tbc

2010

PROGRAMME	VENUE	DATE
ASEM Forum on the Green Growth and SMEs	Korea	1st half
9th ASEM Finance Ministers' Meeting	Spain	tbc
4th ASEM Culture Ministers' Meeting	Poland	tbc
6th ASEM Interfaith Dialogue	Spain	tbc

List of Issue-based Leadership

The Helsinki Declaration on the Future of ASEM recognized issue-based leadership in ASEM. Without prejudice to the role of Coordinators, countries can take the lead in sectors and on issues in which they have a particular interest and expertise. Building on existing cooperation patterns, a mechanism revolving around a number of co-sponsoring countries willing to drive projects and initiatives in a certain policy area can produce tangible benefits for all.

ASEM partners have through consultations agreed on the following basic principles and modalities of issue-based leadership. For the purpose of consistency and balance of participation, and taking into account of evolving political priorities of partners, issue/sectoral leaders or shepherds should be a group of partners, both Asian and European partners may switch leadership between two summits, and each term is normally no longer than 4 years.

Co-leaders/shepherds shall decide upon the modalities of operation of the issue/sector based on consensus. ASEM coordinators shall compile and update the list of issue-based leadership.

List of Issue-based Leadership

Issues	Interested Partners
Development of SMEs	China, Korea, Germany
Inter-cultural Dialogue	Korea
Culture/Tourism	China, Vietnam, Thailand
Education/Human Resources	Germany, Vietnam
Pandemic Control	China, UK, Japan (Avian Influenza) Vietnam (HIV/AIDs)
Transportation	China, Lithuania
Labor/Employment	Germany
Climate Change	Japan, Poland, Denmark
Interfaith and Counter-Terrorism	Indonesia, the Philippines, Spain
Energy Security/Energy Efficiency	Singapore, the Philippines
Food Security	Thailand
International Migration	the Philippines
Finance	Spain
Life Long Learning	Denmark