



PRESS RELEASE

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PR09/02
28 May 2002

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

World Cup Roundtable on Promoting Understanding among Cultures and Peoples *Seoul, Korea*

The Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF) and the Korean National Commission for UNESCO (KNCU) will hold a World Cup Roundtable on Promoting Understanding among Cultures and Peoples on 1 June 2002 at the Hilton Hotel Convention Hall, Seoul, Korea. The Roundtable will bring together 17 eminent public figures, scholars, and opinion makers from different parts of the world to exchange views on the current progress in the promotion of understanding and dialogue among cultures and peoples. The event is supported by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MOFAT) of the Republic of Korea.

The timing of the Roundtable with the opening of the 2002 FIFA World Cup Korea/Japan is no coincidence. Sports have long been recognised and celebrated as a medium through which understanding among cultures and peoples can be promoted. Sports encourage international exchanges and understanding between peoples, unaffected by disagreements of a political, economic or social nature, and cultivate a fertile ground for the nurturing of the universal values of humanity. The Roundtable wishes to build on this insight and carry forward the task of fostering understanding among peoples of the world by gaining from the reflections of the eminent participants.

Recent developments have shown that the need for international understanding is not just an abstract concept. The tragic events of September 11th and the consequent global campaign against terrorism highlight the pressing need for civilisations to better understand one another, to prevent differences from becoming a source of friction and conflict. In fact, efforts to promote international dialogue predate September 11. At the turn of the new millennium, the United Nations declared 2001 the Year of Dialogue among Civilisations.

The principal objectives of the Roundtable are as follows:

- To provide the opportunity for eminent persons representing different cultures from various regions and international organisations to voice their perspectives on the issues arising from dialogue among civilisations;
- To reflect on and define the role of national and international institutions in the promotion of mutual understanding and common values; and

- To enhance the use of a global sporting event like the 2002 World Cup as an occasion to foster international dialogue, consistent with the role of sports in the promotion of international exchanges and understanding between peoples.

Press conference is schedule to take place on **Saturday, 1 June from 12:15 p.m. to 12:30 p.m.**

For more information, you can also contact:

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The programme, the list of participants, and the texts of speeches are also available upon request.

Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF)

ASEF was established in 1997 by 26 members (10 Asian countries and 15 EU member countries, plus the European Commission) of the first Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM). ASEF's mission is to promote better mutual understanding between Asia and Europe through greater intellectual, cultural and people-to-people exchanges. Visit www.asef.org for further information.