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1 December 2008

**Fostering an intercultural collaborative online learning experience:
7th Asia-Europe Classroom Network Conference
Kota Kinabalu, Sabah, Malaysia
12 – 16 December 2008**

The task of promoting mutual understanding between Asia and Europe goes virtual as the **Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF)** recognises the best intercultural online learning schemes from Asia and Europe.

The **Asia-Europe Classroom Network (AEC-NET) Conference** brings together students, teachers and educators from Asia and Europe to exchange their views, methodology, and tools in enhancing cross-cultural learning. It empowers educators by providing them a unique opportunity to create a collaborative intercultural online learning experience for students that is relevant to their schools' curricula. By engaging these participants in interactive on-line platforms geared to promote further dialogue and exchange programmes, long-term collaborations for further dialogue and exchange are established.

The seventh edition of the AEC-NET Conference is entitled, "*Achievements, Visibility and Sustainability of the Asia-Europe Classroom Network*". The Conference will be held in Kota Kinabalu, Sabah, Malaysia from 12-16 December 2008, and will be attended by over 80 participants and observers from 25 Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) countries. Hon. Dato' Alimuddin Haji Mohd. Dom, Director General of Education from the Malaysian Ministry of Education, will be present during the Conference's opening ceremonies.

AEC-NET also recognises effective and sustainable on-line intercultural learning schemes for secondary and high school students from Europe and Asia. During this year's Conference, AEC-NET shall recognise six innovative projects, conceptualised by secondary school teachers, educators and students (please see attached list of the six finalists). Three winners will be chosen to receive a cash prize of EUR 2,000 each to be utilised for furthering the project or developing a new one.

The winners will be announced in a press event during the conference (please see further details overleaf).

The AEC-NET Conference is made possible through ASEF's partnership with the Malaysian National Commission for UNESCO, with the support of the Malaysian Ministry of Education, Sabah State Education Department, Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Environment, Sabah, Maktab Sabah, Sanzac National Secondary School, Sekolah Menengah Sains Sabah and the European Commission.

For further information on the AEC-NET programme and the project finalists, please visit <http://aec.asef.org>

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Public Event:

Journalists are invited to the following public event:

Press Conference: Announcement of AEC-NET Awards Winners

Date: 13 December 2008 (Saturday) | Time: 6:00 PM

Venue: Function Room 9, Level 3, Pacific Sutera Hotel
Sutera Harbour Resort, 1 Sutera Harbour Boulevard, Sutera Harbour,
88100 Kota Kinabalu, Sabah, Malaysia

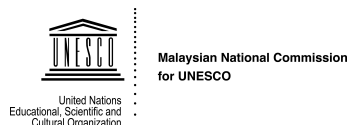
To confirm your attendance, please contact:

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The 7th Asia-Europe Classroom Network Conference is a collaboration of:



The **Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF)** advances mutual understanding and collaboration between the people of Asia and Europe through intellectual, cultural, and people-to-people exchanges. These exchanges include conferences, lecture tours, workshops, seminars and the use of web-based platforms. The major achievement of ASEF is the establishment of permanent bi-regional networks focused on areas and issues that help to strengthen Asia-Europe relations. Established in February 1997 by the partners of the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM)¹, ASEF reports to a board of governors representing the ASEM partners. ASEF is the only permanent physical institution of the ASEM process. Since 1997, the Foundation has initiated projects engaging 14,000 individuals from Asia and Europe. ASEF works in partnership with other public institutions and civil society actors to ensure its work is broad-based and balanced among the partner countries. <http://www.asef.org>



The **Malaysian National Commission for UNESCO (NATCOM)** exists in fulfillment of Malaysia's obligation as a Member State of UNESCO for the purpose of constituting the main channel of co-operation between UNESCO and Malaysian expertise in the areas of its mandate, and managing Malaysia's relationship with UNESCO. Among the functions of the NATCOM are to advise the Government of Malaysia on all matters pertaining to UNESCO and on all matters referred to the Commission by the Minister, act in an advisory capacity to the Malaysian delegations to the General Conference of UNESCO, other meetings and conferences of UNESCO, and to formulate and execute a national programme of activities to complement UNESCO fields of competence. Malaysia is currently being represented by the Hon. Dato' Seri Hishammuddin Tun Hussein, Minister of Education Malaysia to the UNESCO Executive Board. <http://www.unesco.org.my>

Supported by:



Ministry of Education Malaysia
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Maktab Sabah (Sabah College)
http://www.sabah.edu.my/maktab_sabah/



Sabah State Education Department
<http://www.sabahedu.gov.my/>



Sanzac National Secondary School
<http://www.sabah.edu.my/sanzac/index.htm>



Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Environment Sabah
<http://kepkas.sabah.gov.my/home.php>



Sekolah Menengah Sains Sabah (Sabah Science Secondary School)
<http://www.smesh-online.com>



ASEF's contribution is with the financial support of the European Commission

¹ The **Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM)** is an informal process of dialogue and cooperation. It brings together Austria, Belgium, Brunei, Bulgaria, Cambodia, China, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Korea, Laos, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Malta, Mongolia, Myanmar, the Netherlands, Pakistan, the Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Thailand, United Kingdom, Vietnam, the ASEAN Secretariat and the European Commission. <http://www.aseminfoboard.org>

The Finalists:

Brick&Mortar@VirtualHomestay

Brick & Mortar@VirtualHomestay is a project that focuses on architectural structures of the host country. The host (3-4 students from one school) will plan a three-day itinerary which includes visits to local places with unique architectural attractions. This project allows the participants to: (a) share knowledge from different background, cultures and geographical regions; (b) develop understanding and appreciation for local and foreign historical origins of their architectural structures; (c) engage the pupils in authentic learning and creative thinking; (d) initiate pupils to take ownership of their learning; (e) develop socially responsible participants; (f) acquire collaborative skills through working in a team to achieve common goals; and (g) help forge lasting friendship and understanding amongst the students. **Project Co-ordinator:** Ms. Yong Caiyu (Singapore)

Literary Corner

Literary Corner is a project that requires students to write poems, short stories or even dialogues or plays based on given themes. This project allows students to express themselves in short stories, poems, plays etc. given certain themes throughout the project timeline. With guidance from their teachers and from the works of other student participants, it hopes to develop their writing skills. The students will be expected to critique the work of other students, even if it is only to say that they enjoyed reading the piece of writing as it caught their interest. At the same time, they will learn more about the different cultures of the participants from their writing. They will have an opportunity to question the 'writer' about his/her subject matter. In this way, communication will be encouraged. Ultimately, the aim is to have an online publication which can be printed out or read online by students in other schools. **Project Co-ordinator:** Ms. Leonora Anne Peers (Malaysia)

Tailor Inc.

Tailor Inc. allows students to know more about the traditional costume of different participating countries. Through the exchange of information, students will get the opportunity to know and understand the traditional costume worn by different countries and cultures. The end-product aims at synthesising the new knowledge they have obtained to develop a new product. The objectives are to: (a) allow participants to share knowledge and experiences from different backgrounds, cultures and geographical regions; (b) engage the pupil participants in authentic learning and creative thinking; (c) encourage pupils to take ownership of their learning in their areas of synthesising the information to produce brand new knowledge; (d) acquire collaborative skills through working in a team to achieve common goals; (e) help forge lasting friendship and understanding among participants; and (f) help the students to know more about other countries' culture and heritage through their traditional costume. **Project Co-ordinator:** Ms. Chua Cheng Bee (Singapore)

Toys of Our Youth [T.O.Y.S]

Toys of Our Youth showcases students' perspectives on toys and their experiences, and allows them to research on toys, its origins and significance in terms of social, economic and psychological characteristics. The origin of toys is prehistoric. Dolls representing infants, animals, and soldiers, as well as representations of tools used by adults were readily found at archaeological sites. Toys and play are important to the process of learning about the world and growing up. The young use toys and play to discover and explore relationships while adults use toys to form and strengthen social bonds, reinforce lessons from their own youth, and exercise their minds and bodies. Toys are more than simple amusement, and the way they are used profoundly influences most aspects of life. Through this project, participants will deepen their understanding of toys of past generations and their geographical origins. The students would look into the social and economic facets of toys and exchange information with other participants. The evolution of toys from prehistoric times to the present day would lead participants to develop a toy which they believe would be the toy of the future. **Project Co-ordinator:** Mrs. Yuen Chai Lin (Singapore)

Mastering Media Goes Digital

The *Mastering Media Goes Digital* project focuses on how young people today use different technology in their daily lives—to learn, to communicate and to spend their free time. The students will look for relevant research and statistics from their countries about young people (if available) and compare this to their realities. Groups will, for example, deal with the use of mobile phones, computers, or Internet security issues. The final group tasks will be discussed and decided on by the participating teachers and, once the project starts, modified with the participation of the students. In addition, an online social network will be created for students to socialize in. **Project Co-ordinator:** Ms. Sinikka Laakio-Whybrow (Finland)

Young Diplomats - International Ambassadors

The *International Ambassadors* project allows the participating school to choose one other country across continents to become Ambassadors for that country in their own local community. The students will study traditions and prepare multimedia presentations (in Powerpoint and Flash formats) of national celebrations (to be published online) and/or quizzes about the country (to create an online bank of educational resources). Additionally, the schools will contact the embassy of the chosen country for an interview and prepare a presentation/exhibition to promote that country in their local community. They will also prepare a celebration and/or take part in one national holiday or event in the chosen country and send a multimedia report for online publishing. **Project Co-ordinator:** Ms. Halina Bednarz (Poland)

Find out more on our six project finalists at http://www.aec.asef.org/projects/projects2007_finalists.html or contact Ms. Angie Toh at info@aec.asef.org