



P R E S S R E L E A S E

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Asia-Europe Experts on Economic Empowerment for Gender Equality to gather in Manila, **8-10 October 2005**

On the basis that the economic empowerment of women is a critical process not only for the sake of gender equality but also for the global sustainable development and for better distribution of wealth, the Conference serves to draw the useful lessons from studying some of the success stories experienced at the grassroots level in Asia and Europe. These identify the key factors that determine the chances of improving gender equality and relationships, elevating women's voices and promoting women's participation in decision-making at the community, national and international levels.

Under the directorship of Dr. Chia Siow Yue, Senior Research Economist at the Singapore Institute of International Affairs, six researchers have conducted case studies in Indonesia, the Philippines, Japan, France, Greece, and the Netherlands, which will be presented at the Conference. The participants will also exchange views with the aim of creating partnerships between Asia and Europe, while identifying the common challenges and best practices learned in Asia and Europe today.

The keynote speakers include Ms. Magdalena Sroda, Undersecretary of State of the Polish Government in charge of Equal Status of Women and Men, and Senator Loren Legarda, of the Republic of the Philippines.

This conference is the third hosted by ASEF and Japan Center for International Exchange (JCIE) following the Chiba Conference in 2001 (Japan) and Tampere Conference in 2003 (Finland). The Philippines-based Asian Institute of Management (AIM) joins ASEF and JCIE for the upcoming one in Manila.

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ASEF was created in February 1997 by members of the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM). It is based in Singapore and reports to a Board of 38 Governors comprising representatives from: Austria, Belgium, Brunei, Cambodia, China, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Korea, Laos, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Malta, Myanmar, Netherlands, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Singapore, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, Thailand, United Kingdom, Vietnam and the European Commission.