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### **3<sup>rd</sup> Asia-Europe Editors' Roundtable, 9 September 2006, Helsinki, Finland**

Thirty chief editors and senior journalists from prominent media in Asia and Europe convened in Helsinki on the eve of the biennial Asia-Europe Summit, to discuss selected issues of high priority the Leaders would take up at by the ASEM 6 (Asia-Europe Meeting) Summit.

The one-day Roundtable enabled the chief editors and columnists to address the role of the media in promoting inter-civilisational dialogue and how the media could work together to focus public attention on the shared responsibility of the two regions to tackle the threats posed by global climate change. The discussions were moderated by Mr. Tapani Ruokanen, Editor-in-Chief of *Suomen Kuvalehti*, and Mr. Patrick Daniel, Managing Editor of *Singapore Press Holdings*.

The top journalists agreed that as globalisation and the growth of multicultural societies increased the responsibility of media, both internally and internationally, is to derive the best practices and find an appropriate balance between freedom of expression and respect for the cross-cultural differences.

The journalists also emphasised that given the world's current environmental challenges, short-term economic growth should not come at the expense of further degradation of the environment and depletion of non-renewable resources. While inter-governmental co-operation between Asia and Europe is crucial, the role of the media is to focus public awareness on the worsening threats to the environment, based on the consensus already reached by world scientists.

The editors had a breakfast meeting with the Prime Minister of Finland, Mr Matti Vanhanen, and the President of the European Commission, Mr José Manuel Barroso. The Roundtable used this opportunity to assess the prospects of Asia-Europe cooperation in the future and exchange views on the priorities of ASEM6 Summit.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> Editors' Roundtable was organised by the Foreign Ministry of Finland and the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF).

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