

**ASEF Policy Panel
At the Senior Officials Meeting of the 8th ASEM Culture Ministers' Meeting**

***From Cultural Diplomacy towards Cultural Co-operation:
What Future Directions for Asia-Europe Relations?***

**5: 45 – 6:30 pm, 28 February 2018
National Palace of Culture, Sofia, Bulgaria**

CONCEPT NOTE

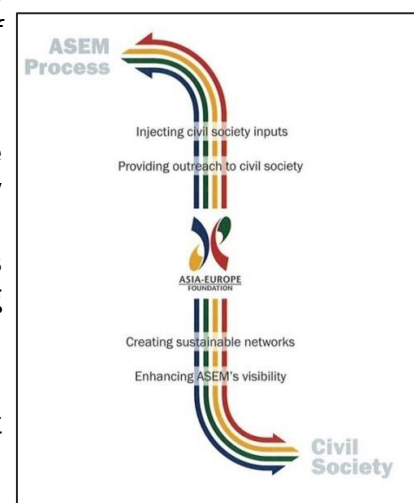
The 8th Asia-Europe Culture Ministers' Meeting (ASEM CMM8), organised in the framework of the [Asia-Europe Meeting \(ASEM\)](#)¹, will discuss issues and trends relating to the role of culture in international relations from 28 February – 2 March 2018 at the National Palace of Culture, Sofia, Bulgaria. This Ministerial meeting is being organised by Bulgaria in the framework of its Presidency of the Council of the European Union from January-June 2018.

The agenda of this Ministerial meeting builds on the on-going dialogue around Asia-Europe exchange and collaboration at previous ASEM Culture Ministers' Meetings. In this framework, the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF) is organising a panel discussion with civil experts titled *From Cultural Diplomacy Towards Cultural Co-Operation: What Future Directions For Asia-Europe Relations?* on 28 February 2018, alongside the Senior Officials Meeting (SOM) of ASEM CMM8.

As the only permanent institution of ASEM, ASEF has an important function in connecting the views and concerns of civil society in Asia and Europe with reflections at the ASEM level. The agenda of ASEF Policy Panel closely follows the topic of the Ministerial meeting, namely, *The Role of Culture in International Relations: The Road Forward*.

In recent years, Culture Ministers from Asia and Europe have – through the ASEM dialogue process – strongly encouraged multi-stakeholder bi-regional dialogue and collaboration on culture and the creative economy. In this context, the ASEF Policy Panel will address the following questions:

- When we talk about the growing role of culture in international relations, are we simply talking about cultural diplomacy in new guise? Or, are the place



¹ The Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) is an intergovernmental forum for dialogue and cooperation between Asia and Europe, focusing on political, economic and socio-cultural issues of common concern. Established in 1996, ASEM now brings together 53 partners (21 Asian and 30 European countries, the ASEAN Secretariat, and the European Union). <http://www.aseminfoboard.org/>

of culture and the arts, indeed, becoming substantial in shaping the future of Asia-Europe relations?

- What roles for new state actors (such as cities and regions) and non-state actors (such as networks, foundations, artists and arts administrators) in international cultural relations?
- Can foreign policy goals ever be compatible with artists' visions?
- How can we ensure balanced cultural exchange and equal partnerships, while fostering greater connectivity between Asia and Europe?
- How can more public-private partnerships be enabled? How can artists and governments work together?
- What might be interesting new models of cultural engagement between Asia and Europe for our increasingly fragile times?
- What role for the ASEM dialogue process in foregrounding culture in Asia-Europe relations?

Panellists: Mr. Andrew MURRAY, Director, EUNIC (European Union National Institutes for Culture) Global Office in Brussels; and, Mr Kennie TING, Director, Asian Civilisations Museum (Singapore) & Chair, Executive Committee of the Asia-Europe Museum Network (ASEMUS); and,

Moderated by: Ms. Anupama SEKHAR, Director, Culture Department, Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF)

Follow us at **#ASEFculture #ASEMCM8**

About us:

The Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF), established in 1997, is the only institution of the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM). ASEF facilitates dialogue, exchange and collaboration among people, institutions and organisations of Asia & Europe. It works in the areas of culture, economy, education, governance, public health and sustainable development. www.asef.org

Our work in arts & culture:

ASEF promotes various forms of cultural cooperation between Asia and Europe including policy dialogue, cultural mobility, bi-regional networks and artistic collaborations. It fosters sustainable partnerships between Asian and European arts organisations, while also facilitating dialogue between the arts sector and government agencies responsible for culture. culture360.asef.org & <http://tinyurl.com/asefculture>

Contact us: Preeti GAONKAR (Ms), Project Manager, Culture Department, ASEF
E: preeti.gaonkar@asef.org; P: +65-68749741