



# Model ASEM

## Switzerland Spin-off 2017

On the occasion of the „Asia meets Europe Day“

1 March 2017 in Lausanne, Switzerland

## Chair's Statement of the Model ASEM Switzerland Spin-off 2017<sup>1</sup>

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### A stronger partnership for future generations

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#### Preamble

1. The Model ASEM Switzerland Spin-off 2017 was held on 1 March 2017 in Lausanne, Switzerland. Under the theme “A stronger partnership for future generations” almost 60 student delegates representing the 53 ASEM Partners attended the meeting. Model ASEM is a political simulation of the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) Summit where participants are invited to role-play their respective ASEM Partners' positions and to develop through negotiations a consensus-based Chair's Statement.

2. The Model ASEM Switzerland Spin-off Leaders noted with appreciation the Chair's Statement and Ulaanbaatar Declaration of the 11th ASEM Summit (ASEM11) held in July 2016 in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia. They acknowledged the valuable stakeholder engagement at several ASEM Ministerial Meetings, in particular at the 5th ASEM Education Ministers' Meeting (ASEM ME5) in 2015 in Latvia, the 12th ASEM Foreign Ministers' Meeting (ASEM FMM12) in 2015 in Luxembourg, the 5th ASEM Labour and Employment Ministers' Conference (ASEM LEMC5) in 2015 in Bulgaria, and the 7th ASEM Culture Ministers' Meeting (ASEM CMM7) in 2016 in Korea. This engagement facilitated a closer connection between the political ASEM process and civil society, represented for example by the youth, university leaders, and cultural managers and experts.

3. The Model ASEM Switzerland Spin-off Leaders reaffirmed the importance of increasing the visibility of ASEM and stressed the necessity of promoting the

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<sup>1</sup> As Model ASEM is a simulation-based project, the points listed in this Chair's Statement do not necessarily correspond with the positions of the organisers or the youth participants.

involvement of civil society – and especially youth – in the interest of strengthening the ties between Asia and Europe and fostering friendship between our people.

4. The Model ASEM Switzerland Spin-off Leaders raised *14 major* points across the three pillars of ASEM (political, economic and socio-cultural cooperation) under the Summit's key focus on "A stronger partnership for future generations".

**A: A stronger partnership for future generations: security, climate change, and inclusion of civil society in political process**

5. Keeping with existing international obligations in mind and acknowledging the negative impacts of climate change and the importance of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Model ASEM Switzerland Spin-off Leaders reiterated their support for combatting climate change. They encouraged members to ratify, respect and go beyond the commitments established at COP21. Investing in mitigation and adaptation strategies in the spirit of cooperation between the regions and on the basis of common but differentiated responsibilities. Model ASEM Switzerland Spin-off Leaders emphasised the importance of international cooperation, while stressing their commitment to capacity building and exchange of best practices and technology.

6. The Model ASEM Switzerland Spin-off Leaders committed themselves to the importance of addressing traditional and non-traditional security threats through partnership and cooperation and through sharing of best practices and information across the regions, including:

- a) prevention of international terrorism and radicalisation;
- b) cyber-security through a global framework.

7. The Model ASEM Switzerland Spin-off Leaders recognised the dangers of weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons, and committed themselves to: promoting implementation of, and adherence to, the relevant conventions and treaties, in working towards Asia and Europe as a zone for peace.

8. The Model ASEM Switzerland Spin-off Leaders recognised the importance of inclusive political processes and committed themselves to strengthening the role of civil society partners in political dialogue by supporting existing mechanisms and creating additional opportunities for civil society to exercise their important role as critical observers in political processes while respecting the legitimate domestic rule of law.

**B: A stronger partnership for future generations: free trade and its barriers, employment, and sustainable development**

9. The Model ASEM Switzerland Spin-off Leaders emphasised the importance of allowing free trade and reducing its barriers and enhancing diversified trade networks, infrastructure and communication in order to support growing economies and opportunities for all. Leaders reiterated their belief that protectionism harms the worldwide competitiveness and the further deepening of Asia-Europe relations. Furthermore, leaders noted the proposal for the

implementation of a knowledge-sharing platform for expertise in order to intensify exchanges and improve the mobility of the Asian and European workforces.

10. The Model ASEM Switzerland Spin-off Leaders renewed their commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and highlighted the importance of the SDGs for future generations. They urged increased cooperation between all stakeholders, including International Organisations, the private sector, NGOs and civil society.

11. The Model ASEM Switzerland Spin-off Leaders recognised the importance of the digital economy in fostering growth and development and stressed the importance of increasing connectivity between Asia and Europe. This should be done among other things by providing a cyber-secure vocational training platform for expertise, research partnerships, and online education among academic institutions, governments, and private companies of member states. They further committed themselves to providing the IT infrastructure to developing countries needed to improve and empower communication and security in trading processes, foster innovation, and reduce poverty.

12. The Model ASEM Switzerland Spin-off Leaders recognised the importance of a minimal definition of common standards in the area of digital technologies. They committed themselves to the elaboration of such standards.

### **C: A stronger partnership for future generations: education and cultural heritage**

13. The Model ASEM Switzerland Spin-off Leaders emphasised the importance of a socio-cultural approach that relies on education, dialogue, and interaction across Asia and Europe as supporting strategies to counter violent extremism and tackle social inequalities by fostering cooperation and mutual understanding.

14. The Model ASEM Switzerland Spin-off Leaders reaffirmed their commitment to inclusive and equitable quality education as outlined in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and urged all partners to increase their efforts to make such provisions available to all members of society. They encouraged a focus on facilitating exchange of information and collaboration between ASEM actors and stakeholders, emphasizing the special role of digitalisation in bridging geographical distances and increasing access to quality education and vocational training by best-practice sharing.

15. The Model ASEM Switzerland Spin-off Leaders recognised the importance of academic and student mobility across Asia and Europe and called for strengthening exchange opportunities for students, teachers, and researchers. This could be done through improving existing initiatives and supporting new exchange programmes, as well as encouraging further discussions on recognition and equivalence of degrees. Leaders urged the formation of a discussion group looking into similar exchange programmes for vocational training.

16. Seeking to achieve “A stronger partnership for future generations”, the Model ASEM Switzerland Spin-off Leaders recognize the impact of innovative technologies. The leaders therefore propose to promote, on a voluntary basis, a

more intense sharing and circulation of ideas and knowledge between ASEM partners.

17. The Model ASEM Switzerland Spin-off Leaders recognized the potential of sustainable tourism to act as a tool for development, social inclusiveness, mutual understanding, and cultural diversity. They therefore actively encouraged the promotion and exchange of good practices in sustainable tourism among all ASEM partner countries.

18. The Model ASEM Switzerland Spin-off Leaders recognised importance of cooperation and exchange between researchers and representatives of cultural institutions to improve conservation and sharing of cultural heritage. They supported the digitalisation of cultural heritage to preserve it for future generations.

#### **D: Concluding remarks**

19. With last year's 11th ASEM Summit in mind, the Model ASEM Switzerland Spin-off Leaders congratulated all partners of the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) process to the 20th anniversary of ASEM and the successful cooperation and progress achieved over the past two decades. The Model ASEM Switzerland Spin-off Leaders agreed that ASEM is a key process for fostering partnership for future generations and continuing dialogue and cooperation with the needs of future generations in mind.

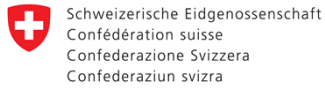
20. The Model ASEM Switzerland Spin-off Leaders expressed their appreciation to all Model ASEM Partners; especially the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs as the organiser; the main partners DiploFoundation, École polytechnique fédérale de Lausanne (EPFL), Model United Nations (MUN) EPFL, and the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF) as supporter.

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# Organisers and Supporters of the Model ASEM Switzerland Spin-off 2017

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