

PRESS RELEASE**FOR IMMEDIATE
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Emeritus Senior Minister Goh Chok Tong attends ASEF 15th Anniversary Signature Event as Guest-of- Honour

SINGAPORE – The Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF) organised a signature event, the Award Ceremony for the first Asia-Europe Short Films Contest in Singapore to commemorate its 15th Anniversary on Thursday, 17 May at the National Library Singapore. Emeritus Senior Minister (ESM) Goh Chok Tong was the Guest-of-Honour and the Keynote Speaker for this event as he had played a pivotal role in the creation of Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) and ASEF. ESM Goh also presented awards to the winning young filmmakers from Asia and Europe of this Contest.

Singapore is one of the first 25 member states of the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) Summit in 1996 in Thailand which paved the establishment of the Foundation in the following year. Currently, 46 countries in the two regions, the European Commission and the ASEAN Secretariat, are represented in ASEF.

In 2010, ASEM welcomed Australia, New Zealand and Russia on board. Its continued enlargement serves a testament to ASEF's increasing relevance in fueling the dialogue between Asia and Europe. Representatives from all member states attended today's event at the National Library.

Over last 15 years, the organisation engaged more than 17,000 direct participants with over 550 different projects in the fields of arts and culture, public health, environment, economy, education and human rights. This year, commemorating 15 years of bridging people from governments and civil societies of both regions, ASEF will host a range of initiatives in countries such as Estonia, Myanmar, The Netherlands, Laos and Korea, to name a few.

The Asia-Europe Short Films Contest is one such initiative of the year. It was launched in February this year. Since then, more than 300 young filmmakers from about 30 countries registered in this Contest.

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Other ASEF 15th Anniversary events

ESM Goh Chok Tong inaugurated the **Traveling Exhibition “Connecting Histories. Shared Future”**. The theme of this Exhibition alludes to a future in which Asia and Europe are equal partners, each aware of the other’s importance. ASEF in partnership with the European Union Centre in Singapore (EUC) will be staging this Exhibition at the NLB (17 May-25 June). Later the Exhibition will travel in other regional libraries in Singapore and finally, make its way to the 9th Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) Summit in Vientiane, Laos (5-6 November).

Date: 18 May – 25 June 2012
Venue: National Library Singapore

“When Strangers Meet: Visions of Asia and Europe in Film”, a special programme will screen seven feature films at the National Museum of Singapore (18 May - 3 June 2012). The programme opens with the screening of one of first films to be shown in colour, *The River* (1951), by acclaimed French director Jean Renoir on 18 May 2012. It will host the Singapore premier of the films *Tropic of Emerald* (27 May 2012) and *Moving* (3 June 2012). Admissions to all screenings are free.

Opening Day: 18 May 2012
Venue: National Museum of Singapore
Timing: 6.30 pm

The Singapore chapter of the exhibition **“Shared Heritage: As we see it”** will be presented at the NUS Museum in Singapore (11 May – 13 June 2012). This exhibition was first launched in Penang, Malaysia last year with the 17th ASEF University programme. 41 participants from 31 ASEM countries participated in that 2-week programme. Later the exhibition travelled to Hungary and Romania.

Special Event: 22 May 2012
Venue: NUS Museum
Timing: 11.00 am – 1.00 pm

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ABOUT THE ORGANISER



Asia-Europe Foundation

The Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF) promotes greater mutual understanding between Asia and Europe through intellectual, cultural and people-to-people exchanges. Through ASEF, civil society concerns are included as a vital component of deliberations of the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM), which currently comprises of 46 member states plus the European Commission and the ASEAN Secretariat (www.aseminfoboard.org) ASEF was established in February 1997 by the participating governments of ASEM and has since engaged over 17,000 direct participants through more than 550 projects in the realms of economy and society, environment, education, public health, arts and culture, human rights and governance, and inter-communal dialogue. www.asef.org

In 2012, ASEF is commemorating its 15th Anniversary and invites everyone to take part in celebrating **Connected Histories, Shared Future**.