



Strengthening Human Rights to combat Human Trafficking

The Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF) together with the Raoul Wallenberg Institute, the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Development, and the Philippine Department of Foreign Affairs will be organising the 15th Informal ASEM¹ Seminar on Human Rights on Human Rights and Trafficking in Persons on 24-26 November 2015 in Montreux, Switzerland.

Press Release

For Immediate Release

23 November 2015
Singapore

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More Information

<http://bit.ly/1WqQVQr>



The 15th Informal ASEM Seminar on Human Rights will be hosted by the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs of Switzerland. Ambassador Michèle RAMIS, Ambassador-at-large on organised crime, French Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Development welcomed the event. Amb. RAMIS highlighted, "Each year, more than 2 million people, mostly women and children, are victims of human trafficking. ASEM member countries need to build a strong partnership to protect the human rights of trafficking victims".

Ms Madina JARBUSSYNOVA, OSCE Special Representative and Co-ordinator to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings, and Ms Myria VASSILIADOU, EU Anti-Trafficking Coordinator will be among the keynote speakers at this event.

Bringing over 125 participants including senior government representatives and civil society experts from across Asia and Europe, the Seminar aims to develop recommendations for strengthening human rights in relation to anti-trafficking measures.

The closed-door working group discussions during the Seminar will focus on: preventive measures, protection and assistance of trafficked persons, access to justice, and international cooperation against trafficking.

"Human Trafficking is a global challenge, affecting all countries in Asia and Europe equally. While the prevention of trafficking and the prosecution of traffickers is important, we also need to devote equal, if not more, attention to the protection and assistance of trafficking victims. The 15th Informal ASEM Seminar on Human Rights is a timely event for us to focus on these aspects of anti-trafficking", emphasised Ambassador ZHANG Yan, Executive Director of the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF).

The Informal ASEM Seminar on Human Rights Series was initiated by France and Sweden at the 1st ASEM Foreign Ministers' Meeting (ASEM1) in 1997. In 2011, the Department of Foreign Affairs of the Philippines joined the Series as an organiser. The initiative promotes mutual understanding and co-operation between Asia and Europe in the area of political dialogue, particularly on human rights issues. ASEF has been the secretariat for the Seminar Series since 2000. Participation in the Seminar is by invitation only.

For more information, please visit: <http://bit.ly/1WqQVQr>

¹ The Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) is an intergovernmental forum for dialogue and cooperation established in 1996 to deepen relations between Asia and Europe, which addresses political, economic and socio-cultural issues of common concern. ASEM brings together 53 members (21 Asian and 30 European countries, the ASEAN Secretariat, and the European Union).

About the Organisers



The **Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF)** promotes understanding, strengthens relationships and facilitates cooperation among the people, institutions and organisations of Asia and Europe. ASEF enhances dialogue, enables exchanges and encourages collaboration across the thematic areas of culture, economy, education, governance, public health and sustainable development.

ASEF is an intergovernmental not-for-profit organisation located in Singapore. Founded in 1997, it is the only institution of the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM).

Together with about 750 partner organisations ASEF has run more than 700 projects, mainly conferences, seminars and workshops. Over 20,000 Asians and Europeans have actively participated in its activities and it has reached much wider audiences through its networks, web-portals, publications, exhibitions and lectures.

For more information, please visit www.asef.org



The **French Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Development**, as a founding member of ASEM, is pleased to have supported the ASEM human rights dialogue since its inception in 1997.

For more information, please visit <http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/>



The **Raoul Wallenberg Institute** of Human Rights and Humanitarian Law is an independent academic institution dedicated to the promotion of human rights through research, training and education. Established in 1984 at the Faculty of Law at Lund University, Sweden, the institute is currently involved in organising in Lund two Masters Programs and an interdisciplinary human rights programme at the undergraduate level. Host of one of the largest human rights libraries in the Nordic countries and engaged in various research and publication activities, the Raoul Wallenberg Institute provides researchers and students with a conducive study environment. The Institute maintains extensive relationships with academic human rights institutions worldwide.

For more information, please visit www.rwi.lu.se



The **Philippine Department of Foreign Affairs** is the prime agency of the Philippine government responsible for the pursuit of the State's foreign policy. It is also responsible for the coordination and execution of the foreign policies of the country and the conduct of its foreign relations.

For more information, please visit <https://www.dfa.gov.ph>



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The **Federal Department of Foreign Affairs of Switzerland (FDFA)** forms and coordinates Swiss foreign policy on behalf of the Federal Council, pursues foreign policy objectives, safeguards the interests of Switzerland and promotes Swiss values.

For more information, please visit www.eda.admin.ch