



## **Manila Model ASEM Declaration on Strengthening Civil Societies and Promoting Human Rights**

Manila, 28th of February 2007

We, Heads of State and Government from ASEM member countries, the President of the European Commission, and representative of ASEAN, gathered in Quezon City, Manila, the Philippines on 28<sup>th</sup> of February 2007 for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Model Asia-Europe Meeting,

- Recognising that there are diverse opinions on the universality of human rights;
- Recognising that human rights violations are no longer just national issues but still we recognize the sovereignty of individual states;
- Recognising that there is a consensus on strengthening civil society to uphold these rights in various contexts;
- Recognising that we need to deplore the unnecessary suffering of any or all peoples;
- Concerned with protecting the rights and welfare of all people, including migrant workers, indigenous peoples, women and children by state and non-state actors;
- Concerned with the continuing incidents of human rights violations and the gravity of these offenses;
- Underlining that the problem of human rights must be dealt with appropriate actions and policies that are in conjunction with the specific context of each country's experience;
- Underlining that there is a need to give emphasis on the process of constructively engaging with the problem of human rights violations instead of focusing on output-oriented approaches;

- Underlining that there is a need to further improve the incentives in promoting human rights;
- Acknowledging that there is a need for strengthening the role of civil society organizations with governments in engaging the problem of human rights violations;

Decide to issue the following declaration and commit to the following guiding principles in order to appropriately address the issues in concern and to lead Model ASEM successfully to the next meeting:

We hereby declare

- That the different countries participating in the ASEM process mutually respect each other's views in promoting human rights;
- That there is a need for strengthening the role of civil society organizations with governments in engaging the problem of human rights violations;
- That there is a need to give emphasis on the process of constructively engaging with the problem of human rights violations instead of focusing on output-oriented approaches.