



BACKGROUND

Within ASEM, cultural co-operation has recorded remarkable achievements thanks to the efforts made by its members and the continuous activities by ASEF since its creation in 1997. Cultural activities, ranging from dialogues and exchanges of views to networks and platforms, have to a considerable extent helped ASEM people to overcome prejudices and to enhance mutual understanding and tolerance.

Nevertheless, a need for more coordination and a common vision among policy makers has been identified within ASEM. Given the richness, diversity and long history of its cultures, co-operation in the cultural field has the potential to contribute to an enhanced image of ASEM.

During the ASEM7 meeting in Beijing, China in October 2008, the Vietnamese Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) presented the idea to organise a workshop on “Enhancing ASEM visibility through cultural activities” in Vietnam. The proposal was endorsed and co-sponsored by Italy and Hungary. Since then, the Vietnamese Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Vietnamese Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Sports has worked on the development of the proposal and has requested the support of the Asia-Europe Foundation towards the organization and concept of the workshop.

CONTENT

The workshop aims at bringing together Senior officials from MOFA and Ministry of Culture from ASEM countries; scholars and experts on cultural policies in Asia and Europe and representatives from cultural NGOs and international organisations.

The workshop will create an increased understanding of the current state of cultural dialogue, exchanges and activities in Asia and Europe and within the ASEM framework. It will give the opportunity to exchange views and ideas on how culture

can be effective platform to enhance visibility of ASEM. The workshop will look into modalities on how to better promote ASEM's image (to how, how and through what kind of activities) in order to increase the general awareness of ASEM for its people and in the world so to bring ASEM closer and more legitimate to its people. The workshop aims to explore a common vision on how a cultural strategy for ASEM can be developed and how it can enhance national and transnational cultural policies. It aims to stimulate more linkages between Ministries of Culture and Foreign Affairs.

The topics of the workshop will be:

- Cultural Diplomacy in the ASEM framework
- Role of NGOs and associations in the cultural dialogue and cultural cooperation within the ASEM framework
- ASEM's role and contribution to the enhancement of visibility of cultural dialogue and activities in the ASEM process
- Recommendations towards enhancing the visibility of the ASEM

(see attached programme)

OUTPUTS

The workshop will provide increased understanding of the necessity to better coordinate ASEM cultural activities to make ASEM more visible. It will create stronger connections between the ASEM Foreign Ministries and Cultural Ministries in order to coordinate future actions to better promote ASEM's image through culture.

The workshop will provide recommendations which will be presented to the 4th ASEM Cultural Ministers Meeting in Poznan (7-9 September 2010) and the ASEM 8 Summit in Belgium (4-5 October 2010). The recommendations will be distributed to the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Ministries of Culture from ASEM partner countries and to the cultural sector.