

Chair's Statement¹

1. Model ASEM Spin-off Singapore 2017 was held on 8-10 December 2017. Under the theme *"Navigating Uncertainties: Defining Digital Frontiers"*, 50 youth representatives from ASEM Partner countries attended the conference. Model ASEM is a political simulation of the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) where youth participants are invited to role-play their respective ASEM Partners' positions and negotiate a consensus-based Chair's Statement.
2. The Model ASEM Leaders acknowledged that this year marks the 20th anniversary of the establishment of the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF). They expressed their commitment to tackling political, economic, social, cultural, and educational issues of common interest in a spirit of mutual respect and equal partnership.
3. The Model ASEM Leaders raised a total of 21 major points across the three pillars of discussion. The pillars were scoped into 3 thematic areas to reflect the nuances in present-day issues surrounding technological progress.

Political: Strategic Response to Tomorrow's Cyber Breaches

4. The Model ASEM Leaders collectively condemned cyber-attacks on all governmental, organisational, and individual levels.
5. The Model ASEM Leaders recognised the importance of promoting greater awareness about cyber-crimes which has become a prevalent issue affecting many ASEM Partners. These cyber-crimes include ransomware and the misuse of information. They proposed the creation of an ASEM Seminar on Cyber Security with ransomware and the misuse of information as key topics for discussion. This seminar would follow the standard framework of ASEM Seminars. The Seminar would be attended by crypto-security experts and Foreign Ministers/Leaders of all ASEM Partners, with the objective of furthering debate and discussion about the issue of ransomware. Model ASEM Leaders requested for the global cyber security development centres from ASEM Partners and other relevant cybersecurity stakeholders be included as participants of the panel discussions.
6. The Model ASEM Leaders agreed to promote greater collaboration between cybersecurity institutions of ASEM Partners to prevent and mitigate cyber-attacks.

¹ 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.

7. The Model ASEM Leaders agreed to strengthen bilateral cooperation between governments and prominent cyber security organisations to prevent and mitigate cyber-attacks.
8. The Model ASEM Leaders emphasised the need for more effective international cybersecurity cooperation of governments, private institutions, and individuals to address cybersecurity challenges. The Model ASEM Leaders agreed to review their cyber-security initiatives within their respective countries and identify possible methods by which a cooperative plan, which includes both government and non-government actors, could be put in place to tackle cyber-crimes. Furthermore, the Model ASEM Leaders agreed to discuss the commencement of such a plan during the next ASEM Meeting after such a review process has taken place.
9. Furthermore, for more effective international cooperation, Model ASEM Leaders affirmed the need to strive towards international cybersecurity, to encourage all international states to adopt cybersecurity laws at national levels and to approach the enforcement of the laws internationally through diplomacy.
10. The Model ASEM Leaders lauded initiatives such as the Interpol Cyber Fusion Centre as well as existing national legally binding frameworks that would serve as a model for other partners to follow through. They suggested that ASEM Partners can model their reactions to cyber-attacks based on these initiatives.
11. The Model ASEM Leaders stressed the necessity of developed countries to render assistance to developing countries in addressing gaps in cybersecurity such as but not limited to financial and skills gaps. Such assistance could be in the form of the transfer of technological expertise, training high-skilled employees with respect to their roles and responsibilities and the methods of cybersecurity from developed to developing countries.
12. The Model ASEM Leaders urged communication and multimedia commissions to work closely with governments to better address challenges in the accurate identification of cyber criminals.

Economic: Charting the New Digital Economy

13. The Model ASEM Leaders recognise the importance of governments in engaging relevant stakeholders in the digital economy, such as but not limited to both state enterprises and private businesses. They further recognised the benefits of collaborations in integrating digital technology with the economy of ASEM Partners through bilateral agreements, and are in favour of holding future annual meetings in Information Technology.

14. The Model ASEM Leaders acknowledged the importance of SMEs in the digital economy and proposed to further strengthen the existing collaborations between SMEs and micro-enterprises in ASEM partners. Henceforth, all ASEM Partners should commit to a greater understanding of micro-enterprises and how they could cooperate to encourage their growth. These collaborations would be supervised by the respective ministries, including but not limited to the Ministry of Economy and the Ministry of Information Technology.
15. The Model ASEM Leaders committed to enhancing cooperation in research efforts in identifying the impact and opportunities of financial technologies.
16. The Model ASEM Leaders proposed to create a common digital entrepreneurship index among ASEM Partners to assess their relevant indicators in digital capabilities. This index would present market opportunities, financial mechanisms, and entrepreneurial culture to determine the most appropriate sectors for investment. The index should be revised once every two years to assess changes in performance of different ASEM Partners. The Model ASEM Leaders further suggested for an expert authority like the Directorate-General to head the evaluation of this index for internal markets, industries, entrepreneurs, and small-medium enterprises to help the realisation of the index.
17. The Model ASEM Leaders acknowledged that governments need to set policies that support innovation and development of the digital economy, including initiatives to prevent negative consequences, such as digital crime.
18. The Model ASEM Leaders recognised the impact of cryptocurrencies on digital economies and agreed on the introduction of protocols to identify fraudulent financial schemes.
19. The Model ASEM Leaders agreed to support the development of digital economies by promoting various measures, such as but not limited to increasing social mobility and market readiness, providing better ICT infrastructure, synchronising regulations, giving incentives to businesses and enhancing access to private finance.

Socio-Cultural and Educational: Closing the Digital Gap

20. The Model ASEM Leaders agreed that developed and developing countries should cooperate mutually in the construction of Smart Cities. ASEM Partners from developed countries expressed their willingness to assist developing ASEM Partners through foreign direct investments (FDI). In return, ASEM Partners from developing countries collectively agreed to maintain low export taxes, ensure social stability within their countries, and be legislatively supportive of investing countries. The Model ASEM Leaders recognized the role of primary stakeholders such as ASEM governments and existing financial institutions in supporting this process.

21. The Model ASEM Leaders agreed to work on raising global education levels across ASEM Partners by increasing the scale of student and professional exchange programmes among ASEM Partners. Furthermore, the Model ASEM Leaders agreed to collaborate on developing an advisory framework for curriculum in schools.
22. The Model ASEM Leaders agreed that there should be a focus on coaching digital literacy skills within their countries with the collaboration of the international community. The ASEM Partners stressed there should be a parallel focus on technological and educational development.
23. The Model ASEM Leaders agreed to increase investment in transportation and satellite networks to connect rural and urban areas as well as to ease urban congestion within their geographical borders.
24. Across the ASEM Partners, technological development of smart cities should be implemented in urban areas prior to expansion into periphery areas. The focus in these developments would include the support for socio-cultural and educational aspects throughout society, and should be driven by government initiatives and voluntary financial contributions.

Concluding Remarks

25. The Model ASEM Leaders congratulated all ASEM Partners of the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) process in its successful cooperation over the past two decades. The numerous initiatives pushed forth through these meetings have laid solid foundations for collaboration and dialogue in the years to come.
26. The Model ASEM Leaders thanked the Ridge View Residential College for organizing the conference and extending their warm hospitality to all participants throughout their stay. The Model ASEM Leaders further thanked the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF), the National University of Singapore (NUS), and the National Youth Council (NYC) for their support, as well as the ASEM Diplomatic Missions in Singapore that hosted a study visit.

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