

## PRESS RELEASE

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## PROJECT INFORMATION

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## MEDIA CONTACT

**Ms Debasmita Dasgupta**

Asia-Europe Foundation

[Debasmita.dasgupta@asef.org](mailto:Debasmita.dasgupta@asef.org)

T: +65 6874 9739

F: +65 6872 1135

## PROGRAMME CONTACT

**Ms Ratna Mathai Luke**

Asia-Europe Foundation

[ratna.mathailuke@asef.org](mailto:ratna.mathailuke@asef.org)

T: +65 6874 9744

The 12<sup>th</sup> Informal ASEM  
Seminar on Human Rights is  
hosted by:



# Experts dialogue on rights online

The 12th Informal Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) Seminar on Human Rights concludes that offline rights apply online

**18 July, Singapore-- The 12th Informal ASEM Seminar on Human Rights brought together about 120 Asian and European delegates from national regulatory authorities, technology promotion bodies, diplomats, human rights activists and internet experts over three days at the end of June.**

The Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF) and the governments of France, the Philippines and Sweden--through the Raoul Wallenberg Institute of Human Rights and Humanitarian Law--organised the seminar in cooperation with the Korean Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MOFAT) and the National Human Rights Commission of Korea.

Mr Kim Sung-han, Second Minister of the Korean Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, remarked: 'The impact of ICT on human rights is like a double-edged sword. While offering new opportunities and benefits, it also poses new challenges. The task that we now face is to expand the opportunities and benefits provided by ICT and to address the various challenges we face in the information society through determined action'.

Given the multiple stakeholders involved, participants emphasised that the rights, duties and responsibilities of all stakeholders need to be clearly defined. Participants also agreed that existing offline human rights safeguards should apply online.

Agnés Callamard, Executive Director of ARTICLE 19 observed in her keynote speech that 'International human rights that were developed and agreed before the IT revolution apply to the on-line world as well... any restrictions to freedom of expression on-line must be clearly and narrowly defined, necessary in a democratic society, and proportionate'.

The organisers conveyed a summary of recommendations [<http://tinyurl.com/6wbe2lb>] to the governments of the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM). ASEM leaders will meet in early November in Vientiane, Laos to discuss a broad range of political, economic and socio-cultural issues.

'This Seoul Seminar has set a benchmark for future human rights dialogue in the ASEM framework' noted Ambassador Michel Filhol, ASEF Executive Director. 'We express the hope that Korea will continue to participate to the in-coming seminars with the same commitment it has demonstrated here in Seoul.'

Independent rapporteurs are writing a full report of discussions with a publication of proceedings expected by the end of the year. The ASEF website provides updates online [<http://tinyurl.com/85xp699>]

## ABOUT THE ORGANISERS



### 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](http://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 600 projects in the realms of economy and society, public health, environment, education, , arts and culture, human rights and governance. [www.asef.org](http://www.asef.org)

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



### Raoul Wallenberg Institute

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. [www.rwi.lu.se](http://www.rwi.lu.se)



### French Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs

For more information, please visit our website: [www.diplomatie.fr](http://www.diplomatie.fr)



### The Philippine Department of Foreign Affairs

The Philippine Department of Foreign Affairs is responsible for the coordination and execution of the foreign policies of the Republic of the Philippines and the conduct of its foreign relations and performs such other functions as may be assigned to it by law or by the President relating to the conduct of foreign relations. [www.dfa.gov.ph](http://www.dfa.gov.ph)

## ABOUT THE HOST



### National Human Rights Commission of Korea

The National Human Rights Commission of Korea (NHRCK) is an independent government body established in 2001 to ensure protection of the inviolable and fundamental human rights of all individuals and promotion of the standards of human rights. The Commission also contributes to realization of human dignity and values, and safeguard of the basic order of democracy. <http://www.humanrights.go.kr/english>