



Asia – Europe Meeting
“ASEM SYMPOSIUM ON THE FUTURE DIRECTION OF ASEM”

The Royal Thai Embassy in Madrid is pleased to inform all ASEM stakeholders in Spain (NGOs, media, business, youth and academia) that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand will host the “ASEM Symposium on the Future Direction of ASEM” on 30 March 2015 at the Royal Orchid Sheraton Hotel, Bangkok. The main objective of the Symposium is to discuss future direction of ASEM as it approaches its 20th anniversary and to set out the framework for future direction towards its third decade.

The ASEM Symposium will be conducted in a panel discussion format. It will start with an “Overview Session” during which experts and representatives from think tanks, specialised in Asia – Europe relations, will share their views on the future of ASEM. This will be followed by 3 plenary sessions according to ASEM pillars namely; Political Pillar, Economic Pillar, and Social and Cultural Pillar. The discussions during these sessions will focus on 3 issues namely: (1) Stocktaking of ASEM’s past challenges and opportunities (2) how do we wish ASEM to be in its third decade (3) Ways and means to achieve such objectives. Enclosed herewith, please find (1) concept paper of “ASEM Symposium on the Future Direction of ASEM” (2) tentative programme of ASEM Symposium and (3) administrative arrangements for participants of ASEM Symposium.

The participation in the symposium is open to any interested agencies and individuals. All participants of the Symposium are required to fill in the online registration form on website <http://asemsymposiumbkk.europetouch.in.th/index.php> from 11 February - 15 March 2015.





Asia-Europe Meeting

CONCEPT PAPER

“ASEM SYMPOSIUM ON THE FUTURE DIRECTION OF ASEM”

1. Background

There has been a number of studies on ways to further improve ASEM process. Notable among them is the “Helsinki Declaration on the Future of ASEM”, which was endorsed during ASEM 6 in 2006 on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of ASEM and has been instrumental in leading to improvements of the ASEM process. Since then, ASEM has grown while the global contexts have changed significantly. The 20th anniversary of ASEM in 2016 provides a great opportunity to seriously look back on the past 20 years and plan for the future of ASEM.

During ASEM 10 in Milan (16-17 October 2014), ASEM leaders welcomed the development of the ASEM process and recognised the need to build upon its strengths and accomplishments in order to move the ASEM process forward. Hence, they tasked the ASEM Foreign Ministers and the Senior Officials to submit concrete recommendations on the future direction of ASEM to the next summit to be held in 2016 in Mongolia, which will mark the 20th anniversary of ASEM. To start off this important endeavor, Thailand proposed to host the ASEM Symposium to discuss the future direction of ASEM and the initiative was welcomed by ASEM leaders. In this connection, Thailand will host **ASEM Symposium on the Future Direction of ASEM on the 30 March 2015 in Bangkok.**

2. Objectives

The main objective of the Symposium is to take stock of ASEM’s achievements thus far and set out the framework for ASEM’s future direction towards its third decade, given new challenges and opportunities in Asia and Europe. One of the particular interests is how to increase ASEM’s relevance and visibility to the public in the long-term.

The summary outcome document of the Symposium will be circulated at the beginning of the ASEM Senior Official Meeting (ASEM SOM) which is expected to start in the afternoon of 31 March 2015 in Bangkok, during which ASEM SOM Leaders will discuss the future direction of ASEM and related issues.

Gist of the Symposium as well as points of discussions from the ASEM SOM Meeting will be reflected in the first draft of the “Bangkok Initiatives on the Future Direction of ASEM”, which will be submitted for further amendments

by the future ASEM SOM meetings. It will then be submitted for approval by the 12th ASEM Foreign Ministers in November 2015 in Luxembourg before the recommendations contained therein will be presented to ASEM leaders during the next summit to be held in 2016 in Mongolia.

3. Structure of the Symposium

The Symposium will be conducted in a panel discussion format and, tentatively, will comprise of 5 sessions namely:

- (1) Overview session,
- (2) Political Pillar session,
- (3) Economic Pillar session,
- (4) Social and Cultural Pillar session, and
- (5) Conclusion session.

The discussions during sessions (2), (3) and (4) will focus on 3 issues namely: (1) Stocktaking of ASEM's past challenges and opportunities; (2) How do we wish ASEM to be in its third decade? and (3) Ways and means to achieve such objectives.

4. Participants

Invitation will be extended to all ASEM SOM Leaders, interested think tanks/agencies, as well as other relevant stakeholders, especially from the following sectors: culture, business, NGOs, education, politics, media, youth and academia. Around 200-250 participants from ASEM members are expected to attend the Symposium.

5. Co-sponsors

ASEM members are invited to co-sponsor the Symposium by sending appropriate panelists for each session of the Symposium.

As of 26 January 2015**Asia-Europe Meeting****TENTATIVE PROGRAMME****“ASEM SYMPOSIUM ON THE FUTURE DIRECTION OF ASEM”****30 March 2015, Ballroom 1, 2nd Floor,
The Royal Orchid Sheraton Hotel, Bangkok, Thailand**

09.00 - 09.30	Registration
09.30 - 10.00	Opening Ceremony
10.00 - 11.00	Session 1: Overview - Presentation on the Future Direction of ASEM Discussion Paper by the author of the paper (15 minutes) - Panel Discussion
11.00 - 11.20	Coffee Break
11.20 - 12.30	Session 2: Political Pillar - Panel Discussion followed by Q&A
12.30 - 13.30	Lunch Break
13.30 - 14.30	Session 3: Economic Pillar - Panel Discussion followed by Q&A
14.30 - 15.30	Session 4: Social and Cultural Pillar - Panel Discussion followed by Q&A
15.30 - 15.50	Coffee Break
15.50 - 16.30	Session 5: Conclusion of the Symposium

Note: All panelists and moderators are cordially invited to attend a dinner on Sunday 29 March 2015 hosted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand.



**Administrative Arrangements
for
Participants**

**ASEM Symposium on the Future Direction of ASEM
30 March 2015
Bangkok, Thailand**

- 1. Date:** 30 March 2015 (full day)
- 2. Venue:** **Ballroom 1**
The Royal Orchid Sheraton Hotel & Tower
 2 Charoen Krung Road Soi 30 (Captain Bush Lane)
 Siphya, Bangrak
 Bangkok 10500
 Thailand
 Phone: +66 2 266 0123
 Fax: +66 2 236 8320
 Website: <http://www.royalorchidsheraton.com/>

3. Registration

The participation in the Symposium is open to any interested agencies / individuals. All participants of the Symposium are required to fill in the online registration form on website <http://asemsymposiumbkk.europetouch.in.th/index.php> from **11 February - 15 March 2015**.

4. Cost

The participation in the Symposium is free of charge. The Host Country will bear the costs of organising the Symposium including venue, facilities, and meals as scheduled in the programme. Participants would bear their own costs for travel, accommodation and all other expenses incurred during their stay.

5. Accommodation

Participants may consider staying at the Royal Orchid Sheraton Hotel & Tower, the venue of the Symposium. Participants who wish to stay at the Hotel are advised to make a room reservation via the online registration of the Symposium in order to receive special room rates. The online registration will redirect participants to the Hotel's website for room reservation. Once the registration and reservation are complete, Hotel's Confirmation Number will be sent to those participants. The special room rates are as follows:

Deluxe Room

Single Occupancy 3,500.- Baht net/Room/Night

Double Occupancy 4,000.- Baht net/Room/Night

The offer includes daily buffet breakfast, high speed internet access, gym facilities, etc.

Check-in time is 15:00 hours. Check-out time is 12:00 hours.

6. Transportation

Airport transfers

The distance between Suvarnabhumi Airport and the Royal Orchid Sheraton Hotel & Tower is approximately 35 km. Taxi and limousine services are available at the airport. Alternatively, public transportation, such as Airport Rail Link takes generally 30 minutes from the airport to Bangkok city centre.

7. Official Language

The official working language of the Symposium will be English.

8. Dress code

Business attire

9. Visa requirements

Participants of the Symposium are required to possess valid visas, if required. Appropriate visas can be obtained directly from Royal Thai Embassies or Royal Thai Consulate-Generals in the respective countries (for further details, please see website <http://www.thaiembassy.org/main/>).

Kindly see the list of countries and territories entitled for Visa exemption and Visa on Arrival on the Immigration Bureau website: <http://www.immigration.go.th/> or contact +66 2 141 9889.

10. General Information

Climate in March

Average low 27 degree Celsius

Average high 35 degree Celsius

Currency and banking

The Thai currency is Baht. Exchange rate is 32.74 Baht / US Dollar as of 23 January 2015. All major international credit cards are accepted in Thailand.

Time

GMT +07:00 hours

Emergency Numbers

Police 191

Fire 199

Medical emergency call 1669

11. Liability

The Host Country shall not be liable for personal accidents and losses or damages to personal / corporate property of the participants.

12. Contact

13.1 On the agendas of the Symposium, please contact ASEM Desk Officers and ASEM Contact Point for Thailand, Ministry of Foreign Affairs:

1. Mr. Kitjawat TACHAROEN
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Address: Department of European Affairs
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Sri Ayudhya Road, Bangkok
10400 Thailand

13.2 On logistics matters, please contact asemsymposium.bkk@gmail.com
