



## **Beijing Declaration on Sustainable Development**

Beijing, 24-25 October 2008

1. We, Heads of State and Government from sixteen Asian countries, twenty-seven member states of the European Union, the President of the European Commission and the Secretary General of ASEAN, gathered in Beijing on 24 and 25 October 2008 for the Seventh Asia-Europe Meeting.

2. Recognizing that challenges posed by increasing global population, environmental degradation, rapid resource depletion and weakening ecological carrying capacity have become more prominent in many countries and regions, and that it is a grave challenge as well as pressing task for humanity to achieve sustainable development. ASEM partners are willing to strengthen cooperation in a mutually beneficial manner and work towards win-win solution so as to make positive contribution to sustainable development;

3. Reiterating that sustainable development bears on the present and future of mankind, the very existence and development of all nations, world peace and prosperity; and that all nations should, whilst pursuing economic development, strive to maintain environment quality and take full account of the needs of future generations;

4. Realizing that economic development, social progress and environmental protection are three mutually reinforcing and interdependent pillars of sustainable development, and emphasizing that Internationally Agreed Development Goals and particularly the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), climate change and energy security, social cohesion are issues calling for special attention in achieving sustainable development;

5. Reaffirming the need for the full implementation of the objectives, principles and action plans identified in the Rio Declaration and Agenda 21 adopted at the UN Environment and Development Conference, the Monterrey Consensus of the International Conference on Financing for Development, Bali Road Map adopted at the 13th COP of the UNFCCC, as well as the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation adopted at World Summit on Sustainable Development;

6. Recalling that ASEM 6 has identified sustainable development, in particular the MDGs, climate change, environment and energy as key policy areas of ASEM for action of the next decade.

Decide to issue the following declaration:

## **I. The Millennium Development Goals**

7. We reaffirm that the MDGs and the Johannesburg targets underpin international cooperation for sustainable development, welcome on-going efforts made by ASEM partners in achieving the MDGs and other IADGs thus far and recognize the grave challenges in achieving the MDGs as scheduled globally.

8. Noting with concern that rising food prices upset global poverty reduction efforts and impede eradication of extreme poverty and hunger, we call for fully coordinated response and comprehensive strategy to tackle this issue in an integrated manner from a short to medium and long term, and through practical cooperation to stabilize commodity markets. We call for increased development cooperation in support of agricultural production, trade facilitation, and technology transfer. We call on all partners to increase sustainable agricultural productivity and grain production, reduce market-distorting agricultural subsidies and to expand investment in agriculture and rural development, create more job opportunities for low-income earners and raise their income level so as to effectively reduce hunger and poverty and to ensure food security.

9. We recognize that there is still a long way to go in achieving IADGs, and in particular the MDGs. We welcome the substantive discussion and consensus at the United Nations High-Level Event on the MDGs in September, and urge all partners to demonstrate greater political will and take concrete actions to strictly fulfill their commitment so as to promote the achievement of the MDGs as scheduled globally.

10. We reaffirm the commitment to establishing a genuine global partnership for development cooperation and stress the leading role of the United Nations in coordinating international development cooperation and building the international consensus on sustainable development matters. We recognize that the timely achievement of IADGs, in particular the MDGs should involve extensively all sectors and encourage civil society and the business sector to play an active part in this endeavour. In this context, we stress the importance of a gender based approach towards development. We emphasize that it is the primary responsibility of each nation to achieve its own development, complemented by an enabling international environment for development. We call on developed countries to increase resources for development and fulfill the commitment of achieving the overall target of using 0.7% of their gross national income (GNI) by 2015 for official development assistance and raise aid effectiveness. We stress ASEM serves as an important complement to efforts at the global level to enhance the global partnership for development, including through intergovernmental and multi-sectoral initiatives.

11. We emphasize that financing for development is an important element for achieving the MDGs and that the international community should implement the Monterrey Consensus expeditiously. We look forward to the substantive progress to be made for international cooperation on development financing at the Follow-up International Conference on Financing for Development to be held in Doha, Qatar 2008.

## **II. Climate Change and Energy Security**

12. We reaffirm that the issue of climate change should be dealt with within the framework of sustainable development. We reaffirm that in order to achieve sustainable development, it will be necessary to combat global climate change in accordance with the ultimate objective of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). We recognize the importance of the assessment reports of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change in particular its fourth Assessment Report.

13. We emphasize that the UNFCCC and the Kyoto Protocol are the main channels for international negotiations and cooperation in climate change, reaffirm the commitment to the objectives, purposes and principles of the UNFCCC and the Kyoto Protocol, particularly the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities. We recognize that ASEM partners share a mutual commitment to finding a long-term multilateral solution to climate change under the UNFCCC and the Kyoto Protocol framework. We welcome the decisions of the Bali Action Plan, containing all the elements for an ambitious, effective and comprehensive agreed outcome for long term cooperative action now, up to and beyond 2012 for strengthening international cooperation on addressing climate change and are committed to the completion of negotiations by 2009.

14. Recognizing the importance of tackling climate change, we affirm that developed countries should continue to show strong leadership and take measurable, reportable and verifiable nationally appropriate mitigation commitments, including quantified emission limitation and reduction objectives, including through sectoral approach, where appropriate, as a tool to implement them, and provide financial support and technology transfer to developing countries. Developing countries will take nationally appropriate mitigation actions in the context of sustainable development, supported and enabled by technology, financing and capacity-building, in a measurable, reportable and verifiable manner, with a view to achieving a deviation from business as usual emissions.

15. We highlight the need for a shared vision for long term cooperative action, including a long term global goal for emission reductions, to achieve the ultimate objective of the Convention and to enable its full effective and sustained implementation, in accordance with the provisions and principles of the Convention, in particular, the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, and taking into account economic and social conditions and relevant other factors. We further stress that, for this shared vision to be credible, it requires all developed countries to take the lead by committing to ambitious and comparable legally binding emission reduction targets. We call upon the international community to consider most ambitious set of targets reflected in the 4th Assessment Report of the Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change.

16. We recognize that actions to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, and to enhance carbon sinks through the promotion of afforestation and reforestation, sustainable forest management, sound land use and sustainable production

and consumption patterns and appropriate measures against illegal logging and associated trade, can make an important contribution to reducing greenhouse gases emission and to preserving biological diversity. We also reaffirm our support of the decisions taken in Bali for achieving policy approaches and positive incentives to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, and the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks in developing countries.

17. Recognizing that adaptation to climate change is vital to address the effects of inevitable climate change and adverse impacts of climate change that affect all countries, especially developing countries, and in particular the least developed countries (LDCs) and small island developing countries, we emphasize that ASEM partners should work together in accordance with their UNFCCC commitments to strengthen the ability of developing countries to adapt to climate change, including vulnerability assessment, prioritization and implementation of adaptation actions, financial needs assessments, technical assistance, capacity-building, risk management and strategies, and mainstreaming adaptation into development policies and strategies.

18. We affirm the critical role of technology, the need for technological cooperation and technology transfer to developing countries. We will work together on technology cooperation in specific economic sectors, promote the exchange of mitigation information and analysis on sectoral efficiency, the identification of national technology needs and voluntary, action-oriented international cooperation, and consider the role of cooperative sectoral approaches and sector-specific actions, consistent with the Convention. We urge enhanced action on technology development and transfer to support action on mitigation and adaptation, to accelerate development, deployment, diffusion, dissemination and transfer of affordable technologies for adaptation and mitigation. We welcome cooperation on research, development, demonstration and deployment of current, new and innovative clean technology, including win-win solutions. We stress that technology cooperation with and transfer to developing countries is a key enabling condition for them to tackle climate change.

19. Noting that addressing climate change requires greater mobilization of public and private financial resources, both domestically and internationally, we support efforts to scale up financial support to developing countries. We also support the creation of incentives for the developing countries to enhance implementation of national mitigation and adaptation strategies and action, and to promote public and private sector funding and investment.

20. Noting with serious concern that the extreme weather conditions caused by climate change have inflicted immense loss of life and property on ASEM members, we call on all partners to implement the decisions made at ASEM 6 by strengthening information exchange systems on natural disaster management and exploring the possibility of establishing early warning mechanisms.

21. We underline the need to act with resolve and urgency during the Climate Change

Conference in Poznan, Poland, in 2008 and work towards an ambitious, effective and comprehensive agreed outcome for long term cooperative action now, up to and beyond 2012 at the Climate Change Conference to be held in Copenhagen, Denmark at the end of 2009.

22. We recognize that climate change is interrelated with energy and should be addressed in integrated manner, with full consideration of the issues of safeguarding energy security, improving energy mix and raising energy efficiency and saving. We support the further exploration of a safe and sustainable low-carbon development path and its integration into sustainable development policies.

23. We reaffirm that energy security is closely related to the stable growth of world economy and sustainable development of all nations, and emphasize that each nation has the right to promote its own development by fully utilizing energy and resources in a sustainable way, while taking into account the carrying capacity of ecosystems and the protection of regional environment. We encourage ASEM partners to strengthen mutually beneficial cooperation in development and utilization of energy and make contribution to safeguarding global energy security. We welcome the convening of the first ASEM Ministerial Meeting on Energy Security that will take place in Brussels in the first half of 2009. We also welcome the convening of the follow-up to the Jeddah Summit on Energy Security in London in December 2008.

24. We call for diversification, sustainability and security of sources of energy supply.

25. We call upon all members to improve energy savings and efficiency, optimize energy consumption structure, develop and utilize renewable and clean energy, including sustainable biofuels while not affecting food security or causing environmental damage and promote transfer, deployment and dissemination of advanced environmentally sound energy technology to developing partners.

26. We stress the need to combine energy cooperation with poverty reduction and environmental protection, to help developing countries, especially the LDCs strengthen infrastructure development, reduce poverty and achieve sustainable development by increasing their access to energy. We recognize the importance of strengthening the role of UNEP in environmental protection.

27. Sharing serious concerns over the evolution and current level of oil prices, we stress that joint efforts should be made by all partners to contribute to the stability, transparency and predictability of oil markets.

### **III. Social Cohesion**

28. Recognizing that an equal and inclusive society must combine economic growth, social development and environmental concerns through integrated strategies and policies, we stress that sustainable development and social cohesion are mutually supportive, and it is through sustainable development that the wealth of society will be

increased, people's lives and human rights will be improved and respected, and social equity and justice will be guaranteed.

29. We stress that the ASEM partners share a common interest in strengthening social cohesion through coherent dialogue and cooperation, thus effectively contributing to a sustainable social dimension of globalization. We recognize the challenges facing ASEM partners in narrowing wealth gap, maintaining social harmony while taking into account the cultural diversity, job creation, health care and social security against the backdrop of globalization and agree to strengthen collaboration to ensure benefit for all in globalization, and to work together in promoting social cohesion. We welcome the results of the ASEM Labor and Employment Ministers' Conferences held in Germany and Indonesia and the outcomes of the 1st ASEM Social Partners Forum held in Brussels.

30. Recognizing the importance of social justice to social cohesion, we emphasize that universal access to education must be ensured. We emphasize that more efforts should be made by ASEM partners to invest in human capital and optimal utilization of human resources, provide basic education, extend the coverage and improve the quality of secondary and higher education, promote professional and vocational education and enhance lifelong learning for everyone.

31. We recognize that promotion of full and productive employment and decent work for all is crucial to safeguard and improve people's livelihood, realize effective social cohesion and achieve MDGs. We note that well designed employment and social policies, good governance as well as full respect and effective implementation of core labour standards set out in the 1998 ILO Declaration on the Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and the 2008 ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalisation are contributing positively to inclusive economic and more cohesive societies, providing everyone, including the vulnerable people, with opportunities to enjoy decent work, better living conditions, access to social and health services, universal access to basic social security system, as well as health and safety at work. We recognize the need for social protection systems, to provide social security and support labour-market participation. We emphasize that achieving a fair distribution of incomes is of great relevance to social cohesion. We welcome the strengthening of the ILO's capacity to promote the Decent Work Agenda and ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization. We underline the key role that good industrial relations and effective social dialogue based on mutual trust and shared objectives can play for sustainable development and management of change. We encourage ASEM partners to strengthen mutually beneficial cooperation in the labour, employment, and social fields. We welcome and support the activities and projects recommended in the Bali Declaration on More and Better Jobs-Strategic Cooperation and Partnership to promote decent work and global labour markets to our mutual benefit which was adopted at the 2nd ASEM Labor and Employment Ministerial Meeting held in Indonesia in October 2008.

32. We note that ensuring social cohesion and mitigating economic and social imbalances, within and among countries, sound, adequate and sustainable social protection, consumer safety and social security systems covering both formal and

informal sectors within urban and rural areas are needed. We emphasize the importance of self-reliance and mutual cooperation of local communities.

33. We recognize that international migration provides shared benefits, can help solve demographic and labour market challenges faced by ASEM partners and achieve sustainable development, especially in developing countries. Noting that the integration of migrants is an important factor in realizing social cohesion, we call on ASEM partners to develop a comprehensive approach on migration, including the promotion of legal migration, effectively addressing irregular migration, as well as the link between migration and development. It should also explore possibilities to develop cooperation with one another on international migration through policy dialogue, development cooperation, and the pursuit of mobility partnerships. We stress the importance of the forthcoming Second Global Forum on Migration and Development to be held in Manila, the Philippines in October 2008 in support of the effective management of migration.

34. Recognizing population ageing has become a grave challenge facing both developed and developing countries, we stress that goals, objectives and commitments identified in the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, 2002 and the related regional strategies are to be met by ASEM partners.

35. Recognizing that harmony between man and nature is part of social harmony, ecological civilization is an important building block for social cohesion and that eco-cities represent the trend for environmentally-friendly and resource-conserving culture, we welcome the initiative of ASEM Eco-City Network proposed by China and encourage ASEM partners to take an active part in it.

36. We recognize that corporate social responsibility is related to, inter alia, environmental protection, labour and human rights, risk assessment, corporate governance and community development and therefore encourages all ASEM partners to promote corporate social responsibility at both national and international level. We encourage businesses to voluntarily undertake social responsibilities, complying with respective national conditions and international norms and laws and contribute to fostering a prosperous, harmonious and socially responsible business environment.

## **Conclusion**

37. We reaffirm to be guided by the principles and objectives on sustainable development set by the United Nations and the consensus reached in this area within the framework of ASEM. We welcome existing ASEM initiatives on sustainable development and encourage ASEM partners to conduct more activities for implementation of this declaration.