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## **Vientiane Declaration on Strengthening Partnership for Peace and Development Vientiane, 6 November 2012**

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**We**, Heads of State/Government from twenty Asian countries, twenty-nine European countries, the President of the European Council, the President of the European Commission and the Secretary General of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), gathered in Vientiane, Lao People's Democratic Republic on 5 and 6 November 2012 for the 9<sup>th</sup> ASEM Summit;

**Stressing** that ASEM has witnessed remarkable development since the forging of a new comprehensive Asia-Europe Partnership for Greater Growth in 1996;

**Acknowledging** that there are great opportunities for enhancing cooperation between Asia and Europe, at the same time, the two regions are facing multifaceted challenges, which are transnational in nature and have an impact on peace and development of our two regions;

**Expressing** our strong desire and collective will to foster an environment of lasting peace, security, stability, and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, which will contribute to sustainable economic and social development;

**Emphasising** that strengthening cooperation between regional organisations and fora through establishing partnership links will contribute to better interaction, aimed at creation of the atmosphere of peace and stability in Asia and Europe;

**Recognising** that the security environment in Asia and Europe are closely linked and the interdependence of global economy is increasingly deepening, and also that there is great potential for synergy between Asia and Europe as a strong partnership for peace and development in both regions and in the world;

**Recalling** the Helsinki Declaration adopted in 2006 on the Future of ASEM to continuously "improve working methods and institutional mechanisms in order to steer the process into its second decade";

**Hereby**

**Strengthening Partnership for Peace**

1. Reaffirmed our commitment to ensure that our people live in true and lasting peace, security and stability, and aspiration to eradicate war from mankind which constitutes a serious threat against their security and dignity;
2. Determined to promote dialogue, enhance better relations and develop partnership in all fields, aiming at promoting mutual understanding and confidence, good neighbourliness and friendly relations among ASEM partners in order to improve the well-being of our peoples and contribute to the fulfilment of their aspiration through, inter-alia, the benefit resulting from progresses and achievements in the political, economic, scientific, technological, social, cultural and humanitarian fields; meanwhile understanding and respecting the national and regional particularities and diversities;
3. Convinced that friendship and solidarity among our peoples would promote better mutual trust leading to the development of better and closer relations among them and would enhance their well-being and livelihood by providing them with equitable access to opportunity for human development, social welfare and justice, thus promoting a people-oriented ASEM;
4. Reaffirmed our determination to respect the right of ASEM peoples to freely choose their political system and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development in accordance with the UN Charter and international law;
5. Renewed our commitment to refrain from the act of threat or the use of force in any manner inconsistent with the UN Charter and international law against the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of any state and to seek peaceful settlement of disputes through dialogue, negotiations and other means in accordance with the UN Charter and international law;
6. Expressed our common adherence to the principles of democracy, rule of law, good governance, gender equality, promotion of social justice and human security, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, in accordance with the UN Charter and international law;
7. Renewed our commitment to deepen and broaden ASEM interfaith dialogue, noting the importance of interfaith dialogue and its valuable contribution to promoting social cohesion, peace and development recognised the role of the UN Alliance of Civilisations in this field and acknowledged the concept of moderation as articulated by the Global Movement of Moderates;

**Strengthening Partnership for Development**

8. Stressed our strong will to strengthen Asia-Europe partnership in development as an essential element of our economic and technical cooperation and assistance, which will forge closer economic and social cohesion and integration and narrow the development gap among ASEM partners;

9. Committed to fighting against poverty and attaining the internationally agreed development goals, and achieving Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) target to ensure poverty eradication, equitable and sustainable development and inclusive growth, we look forward to a transparent and inclusive inter-governmental process for an early conclusion on the Post 2015 Development Agenda, taking into account the work of the UN High Level Panel on Post 2015 Development Agenda and other relevant inputs;
10. Reaffirmed the commitment to achieve sustainable development: sustainable economic growth, social development and environmental protection. We underlined the importance of finalisation of the UN sustainable development goals through a transparent and inclusive inter- governmental process currently being established by the UN General Assembly, in keeping with the outcome of the Rio+20 Conference on Sustainable Development. These goals should be coherent with and integrated into the United Nations development agenda beyond 2015;
11. Committed to enhancing open, fair and rules-based trade in goods and services, investment, expanding markets and resisting protectionism in all its forms, which are necessary conditions for sustained global economic recovery, creation of decent jobs and economic development, and to strengthening the rules-based multilateral trading system and to continue exploring different, fresh and credible approaches to concluding the Doha Development Agenda Round;
12. Stressed the urgent need to intensify common and efficient efforts towards the resolution of major world economic and social challenges, such as food security, energy security, water resources management, commodities price fluctuation, reform of international monetary and financial system, unemployment, especially youth unemployment, disaster management, poverty eradication, inequality, illegal migration and human trafficking. Progress in these areas will lay down a solid foundation for sustainable development, greater economic and social equity, justice, the rule of law, sustainable livelihood and resources management;
13. Emphasised the importance of enhancing cooperation in tackling climate change and reiterated the importance of working together to develop a protocol, another legal instrument or an agreed outcome with legal force as mandated by COP17 of the UNFCCC. We confirmed our commitment to fully implement the outcomes of the Bali Action Plan, the Cancun agreements and the Durban outcome. We are committed to working together in areas including mitigation, adaptation, financing and technology transfer;
14. Committed to sharing lessons learned from the Asian financial crisis in 1997 and from the current economic and financial challenges in Europe, underlined the need for greater cooperation in economic, finance and trade issues that contribute to long-term, strong, balanced and sustainable growth of the world economy;
15. Determined to enhance social-cultural cooperation and development and promote greater people-to-people interaction through increasing cultural, educational, youth, sports, tourism and scholarly exchange and enhancing greater contacts between parliamentarians, media personnel, civil society, academics and track II institutions;

16. Determined to work jointly to adapt ASEM to the new developments and requirements and bring ASEM cooperation to higher levels to constantly strengthen links between Asia and Europe, and to continue to seek to improve working methods and institutional mechanisms of ASEM, with the character of informality, networking and flexibility in the cooperative process for Peace and Development, thereby contributing to global stability and prosperity.

**We**, ASEM Leaders support the full implementation of the Declaration in order to strengthen the comprehensive, equal and mutually beneficial Asia-Europe partnership for peace and development.

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