

Comments for 20 Years of Asia Europe Relations

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Abstract

While this book celebrates the 20th Anniversary of the Asia-Europe Meeting (Asem), it also covers a political dialogue process that brings together governments and civil society members from Asia and Europe. Relevant book chapters are contributed by Asian and European leaders, including heads of state and ministers from Asia and Europe. This provides a detailed explanation of how valuable the economic, political and socio-cultural relations of the relevant process are with the managerial perspectives and contributions.

Keywords: Political • Environment • Human rights • Global tourism

Description

As the book suggests, the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF) is an intergovernmental, non-profit organization that brings together the people of Asia and Europe to address common global issues [1]. It can be said that ASEF has guided countries and their regional economic and political development by launching projects that help explain important developments in both regions with the introduction of the Euro in 1999 and Indonesia's first democratic elections [2]. Also, as Europe prepared to introduce the Euro in 1999, ASEF began to provide Europe with a platform to introduce the Euro to Asia. In addition, it can be discussed that, as an intellectual bridge builder, ASEF has paved the way for problems by holding discussions on issues that often divide politicians and intellectuals in Asia and Europe, such as human rights and the Myanmar (also known as Burma) issue. In addition, a seminar was organized in Paris with the support of the French Ministry of Finance to discuss the causes of the Asian financial crisis and the expectations of Asia after the crisis, and created an environment for the exchange of ideas among experts.

It is also understood that the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM), launched in 1996, is a unique, informal platform for political dialogue and cooperation between Asia and Europe [3]. It brings together 53 partners, including 51 European and Asian countries, the Secretariat of the European Union (EU) and Southeast Asian Countries (ASEAN). The Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) is the only permanent institution of the political dialogue process and is publicly funded with the voluntary contributions of 53 ASEM Partners. ASEM partners represent 65% of global GDP, 60% of the global population, 75% of global tourism and 60% of global trade. It can be said that ASEM is not just a meeting place for governments, political leaders and senior

officials but it is also a platform for the people of Europe and Asia to promote joint action towards a common future.

As it can be seen from the articles, ASEM raises awareness to the continents of Asia and Europe by promoting informal, open and conflict-free dialogue on human rights issues between civil society and government representatives. ASEM also causes awareness to public diplomacy by providing tailored capacity building training to the diplomats.

It can be indicated that ASEM is an organization that fosters mutual understanding and cooperation among its partners because it equips them with up-to-date tools and necessary approaches to better understand their domestic policies abroad and provides a unique networking opportunity to connect Asian and European diplomats.

The informal ASEM Seminar on Human Rights (ASEMHRS) provides a platform for the exchange of views and practices on human rights in Asia and Europe and brings together government officials, academics and civil society representatives from Asia and Europe for dialogue on questionable issues. It is realized from the chapters of the book that ASEM adds value to Asia-Europe relations by turning its results from its projects into actionable inputs for Asia-Europe policy dialogue. Suggestions are also made available to the public through ASEMHRS publications and seminar reports. Seminar recommendations and results are introduced to a wider audience through outreach events and are used to educate government officials and practitioners on human rights issues.

ASEM contributes to Asian-European countries by organizing training workshops in order to share its understanding of public diplomacy with people who contribute to the administration, to

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determine strategy accompanied by case studies and to establish different communication and idea networks through peer studies.

ASEF Classroom Network (ASEF ClassNet) continues to foster collaboration among middle and high school teachers and students in Asia and Europe. ASEM Education Center is now known as ASEF Higher Education Program and manages four sub-activities: ASEM Rectors Conference and Student Forum (ARC), Asia-Europe Education Workshops, ASEM Education and Research Center for Lifelong Learning (ASEM LLL Hub) and Education Exchange Programs Database (DEEP).

It is understood that ASEF has undergone many changes since 2000. With these changes, new opportunities and challenges have occurred for ASEM [4].

It can be said that one of the biggest changes is in the number of ASEM members. The number of ASEM's member was 26 in 1997 and it has increased to 53 after 2000. This development has had significant implications for the way ASEF works. This has made ASEF board meetings a much larger commitment, both in terms of logistics and agenda setting, as its founding principles stipulate that every ASEM member is represented on the ASEF Board of Directors.

Additionally, it can be seen from the Book that, this numerical expansion has meant that there are potentially many more sources of support, both intellectually and financially. It also means more countries could be reached for policy making, more countries to raise the profile of ASEF, and more countries to expand projects.

Conclusion

As a result, over the years, many representatives from ASEM member countries served on ASEF's board of directors and expert

committees, and even served as staff. Today, 19 years after its establishment, ASEF actively stands by ASEM. It has played a unique and important role in promoting mutual understanding between Asia and Europe.

It is also discussed that ASEM members have demonstrated and still do so by believing in ASEF's mission and making significant and regular financial contributions to the continuity of the foundation. Each ASEM member has a responsibility to assist in the development of ASEF. As a representative on the ASEF board of directors, they contribute to ASEF's mission and vision, as well as to its work plan. It is seen that this responsibility will continue to enable and support ASEM to establish strong and meaningful relations between Asia and Europe.

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