



**The 2nd ASEM LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT MINISTERS MEETING
Declaration
on**

**More and better jobs - Strategic Cooperation and Partnership to promote
decent work and global labour markets to our mutual benefit**

Bali, 14-15 October 2008

**We, the Ministers and Heads of Delegations participating in the 2nd
ASEM Labour and Employment Ministers Meeting, held in Bali from 14 to
15 October 2008,**

**Having considered the theme “More and Better Jobs – Strategic
Cooperation and Partnership to promote decent work and global labour
markets to our mutual benefit”;**

Recognizing the 2005 World Summit outcome;

**Recalling and reaffirming the chairman's conclusions of the 1st ASEM
Labour and Employment Ministers Meeting held in Potsdam, Germany,
from 3-5 September 2006;**

**Recalling and reaffirming the Helsinki Declaration on the Future of
ASEM, adopted at the 2006 ASEM Summit held in Helsinki, Finland, on
10-11 September 2006;**

**Recalling the recommendations reached at the preparatory meeting held
in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, on 12-13 September 2007;**

**Reiterating the need to reinforce regional cooperation between the EU
and Asia to strengthen the social dimension of globalization;**

**Recalling that the promotion of full and productive employment, decent
work for all, including full respect for workers' rights, social protection,
social dialogue, are key factors to achieve sustainable economic
development, social progress and social cohesion;**

**Recognizing the ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair
Globalization, adopted on 10 June 2008 during the 97th Session of the
International Labour Conference in Geneva;**

Recognizing the conclusions of the ASEM Conference of Ministers Responsible for Education on the theme of “Education and Training for tomorrow: Common Perspectives in Asia and Europe”, held in Berlin on 5-6 May 2008.

Reiterating and recognizing the need to involve social partners in the ASEM dialogue process and cooperation activities in an appropriate way;

Welcoming the 1st ASEM Social Partners Forum, held on 30 June - 1 July 2008 in Brussels.

Recognizing the outcomes of the social partner consultations held in combination with this meeting;

Have adopted the following declaration:

- 1. We underline the importance of the ASEM process as a platform for dialogue and cooperation between the EU and Asia. We are glad to see the dialogue sustained and expanded into the area of labour and employment to address the challenges in the labour market and social dimension of the current financial crisis which needs ASEM’s keen attention.**
- 2. A sustained and reinforced dialogue on labour and employment will help us address the strategic and long term social dimensions of globalization and its related challenges, in line with the conclusions of the 1st ASEM Labour and Employment Ministers Meeting in Potsdam, Germany, September 2006, and the 6th ASEM Summit held in Helsinki, Finland, in September 2006.**
- 3. It will also contribute to a fair distribution of the benefits of globalization, including continued endeavors to promote sound economic policies and provide appropriate active labour market policies; build adequate social protection systems; invest efficiently in human capital and lifelong learning; enable good governance and effective social dialogue; and support tailored measures to address economic and social imbalances between and within our economies.**
- 4. We reiterate our strong support for a fair globalization and resolve to make the goals of decent work and good governance key elements of our efforts to achieve the internationally recognized–development goals by way of coherent, consistent and mutually supportive national and global economic, social and environmental policies.**
- 5. We highlight that labour market, social economic and environmental policies, developed in cooperation with social**

partners and other stakeholders, have the potential to contribute in a mutually reinforcing way to decent work, economic growth and the global environment for achieving sustainable development. In this context, we take note of the Niigata Global Balance Principle delivered by the G8 Labour and Employment Ministers in May 2008, endorsing the ILO concept on green jobs.

6. We resolve to promote decent work for all, recognized by the international community as an effective response to the challenges of globalization, by addressing the formal and informal sectors of our economies, including through facilitating transitions from the informal sector to the formal one in each economy, and to seize the opportunities provided by globalization by fully respecting and effectively implementing 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, by protecting and promoting the rights of migrant workers taking into account relevant guidance, and by considering developing further decent work initiatives in all countries, related inter alia to universal access to basic social security systems as well as health and safety at work.
7. We take note that some ministers refer to the 97th International Labour Conference held in Geneva, and recall the conclusions on Myanmar adopted by this conference, reiterating the need for Myanmar authorities to continue cooperating with the ILO and follow up on these conclusions. We confirm our engagement to using ASEM dialogue and other appropriate channels to improve core labour standards, and promote social development in Myanmar.
8. We commit to take actions, aimed at fighting against poverty, inequality and exclusion through the implementation of comprehensive policies for more inclusive and equitable societies in all countries, irrespective of their level of income, notwithstanding differences in specific immediate priorities and needs. This includes in particular the promotion of full, freely chosen and productive employment and decent work for all and the enhancement of social protection for all, including workers in the informal economy, with broader and effective coverage, which should be guided by each country's needs and circumstances and recognizing the need for social protection systems to provide social security and support labour-market participation. We confirm our commitment to the UN Millennium Development Goals, and notably target 1 to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger, including notably through the promotion of full and productive employment and decent work for all as global goal.

9. In view of the above, we also highlight the need to mobilize all relevant stakeholders including social partners and to adopt a comprehensive approach, with regard to the promotion of corporate social responsibility. 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. This contributes positively to the management of strategic challenges in an ever changing economic and social environment.

10. In line with constructive dialogue and taking into account the above considerations we, the Ministers and Heads of Delegation of the participating states of the 2nd ASEM Labour and Employment Ministers Meeting in Bali, Indonesia, recommend the following activities/projects to reinforce our partnership and cooperation:

- a. *Activity/project 1: Strengthening dialogue and cooperation through regular Senior Official and Technical Working Group Meetings, as appropriate on cost sharing basis;*
- b. *Activity/project 2: Setting up ways and means to facilitate technical cooperation in the area of labour and employment.*
- c. *Activity/project 3: Intensifying exchange of experiences, expertise and good practice as well as capacity building in the area of training and employability, social protection and labour migration, including through the following possible technical cooperation projects*
 - i. Decent work, including social security for workers in particular in the informal sectors. Project leader: France;
 - ii. Cooperation on Occupational Safety and Health (OSH). Project leader: Singapore, Indonesia ;
 - iii. Cooperation in the field of corporate social responsibility for the well being of ASEM workforce. Project leader: Germany;
 - iv. Cooperation in the field of technical or vocational education and training, including exchanges of experience on qualification frameworks in Asian and European countries. Project leader: Philippines.

In line with the concept of issue-based leadership endorsed in the 2006 Helsinki Declaration on the Future of ASEM, and

without prejudice to the role of coordinators and to the financing of activities, project leaders will drive projects and initiatives on issues in which they have a particular interest and expertise. They will also report, as appropriate, on progress made at the next ASEM Labour and Employment Ministers Conference in 2010.

d. *Activity/project 4*: Further developing an adequate framework for constructive dialogue with social partners under the ASEM process and involving them in related partnership and cooperation activities/projects where appropriate.

11. We share the view that such partnership and cooperation activities/projects should be action-oriented and based on mutual consent concern and to the mutual benefit of ASEM countries.

12. We recognize the need to cooperate in relevant international fora, including in the UN and notably the ILO, the WTO, the World Bank, the IMF and the OECD with a view to improving coherence and an integrated approach in strengthening the social dimension of globalization and meeting the related challenges;

13. We put this Declaration forward to the 7th ASEM Summit in Beijing and call upon the Summit to acknowledge it and endorse our proposals for a reinforced partnership and cooperation between the EU and Asia to promote decent work and global labour markets to our mutual benefit.

14. We express our support for an ASEM Declaration on sustainable development and social cohesion, to be adopted at the 7th ASEM Summit on 24-25 October 2008 in Beijing.

Bali, 15 October 2008