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4. Asks to be consulted again if the Council intends to amend the Commission proposal substantially;
5. Instructs its President to forward its position to the Council and Commission.

## 11. ASEM Process

**A5-0207/2001**

**European Parliament resolution on the Commission Working Document: Perspectives and Priorities for the ASEM Process (Asia Europe Meeting) into the new decade (COM(2000) 241 – C5-0505/2000 – 2000/2243(COS))**

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to the Commission's Working Document (COM(2000) 241 – C5-0505/2000),
  - having regard to the Third Asia Meeting (ASEM) held in Seoul from 19 to 21 October 2000 and to the Asia-Europe Cooperation Framework 2000 (AECF 2000) which sets out the vision, principles, objectives, priorities and mechanisms of the ASEM process for the next 10 years,
  - having regard to its previous resolutions on ASEM, and, in particular to the most recent ones of 4 May 1999 on the Commission working document on Perspectives and Priorities for the ASEM Process,<sup>(1)</sup> of 4 October 2000 on the Third Asia Europe summit in Seoul (ASEM III)<sup>(2)</sup> and of 16 November 2000 on the ASEM<sup>(3)</sup>,
  - having regard to the report of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, Human Rights, Common Security and Defence Policy and the opinion of the Committee on Industry, External Trade, Research and Energy (A5-0207/2001),
- A. whereas this report has been superseded by the ASEM III summit of October 2000, the European Parliament feels it should comment on developments in the ASEM process and looks forward to preparations for the ASEM IV summit, planned for the second half of 2002 in Copenhagen,
- B. whereas in the past unbalanced economic relations between EU Member States and Asian countries have often caused deep social repercussions and hindered a real long term development and a genuine partnership,
- C. whereas the objective of the ASEM process is to build an equal Asia-Europe partnership based on the three pillars of political, economic and cultural dialogue,
- D. whereas a deepening and reinforcement of relations between the European Union and Asia in the years to come is a matter of the greatest importance for the two regions from both the political and the economic, social and cultural points of view,
- E. having regard to the importance of using the ASEM as a means of encouraging international initiatives designed to promote peace, disarmament and respect for human rights internationally,
- F. whereas the distinct advantages of the ASEM process to Asia-Europe relations lie in its informality, multi-dimensionality and high-level participation,
- G. whereas the ASEM process has already given rise to a plethora of economic, political and cultural meetings, forums and sub-processes,

<sup>(1)</sup> OJ C 279, 1.10.1999, p.69.

<sup>(2)</sup> 'Texts Adopted', Item 17.

<sup>(3)</sup> 'Texts Adopted', Item 6.

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- H. regretting the fact that the EU Member States are not granting visas for private visits to the President, Vice-President, Prime Minister, Foreign Minister and Defence Minister of Taiwan,
- I. whereas, by refraining from devaluing the yuan, China helped to overcome the financial crisis which struck the Asian economies in 1998,
- J. whereas ASEM should in future provide a forum for the informal monitoring, airing and where possible resolving of disputes concerning the application and enforcement of WTO rights and obligations prior to resorting to the formal and public dispute settlement mechanisms of the WTO itself,
- K. whereas the development of robust and enforceable private property law, of non-discriminatory and de-politicised application of the rule of law and the general application of fundamental human, civil and political rights are the essential pre-conditions for the building of genuine, working democracies, regardless of constitutional arrangements; whereas these should become the overriding principles guiding the future work of ASEM,
- L. whereas Japan is going through a crisis such as it has not seen since the end of the Second World War; whereas this situation has serious consequences in that it is preventing Japan from playing its full role in promoting democracy and economic development throughout the Asian continent,
- M. concerned that the lack of a regional safety regime increases ethnic and religious tensions and the potential for inter-state conflict, and that the spread of weapons of mass destruction and missile technologies undermine stability and peace in the region,
1. Calls on the Commission and the governments of the Member States to advocate forcefully the principles and objectives set out in the recitals of this Resolution at every relevant meeting and at all levels of the ASEM process and calls on the Commission to report back to the European Parliament, at least six months prior to each ASEM summit, on the progress achieved to date on each one;
  2. Welcomes the commitment of the ASEM leaders at the Seoul summit, to support human rights, democracy and the rule of law, and urges them to intensify this as the core element for the Asian-European cooperation and dialogue on the political, economic (notably trade) or cultural levels and to include such commitments in the key ASEM documents and meetings;
  3. Welcomes the objectives established in the social, cultural and educational sectors during the ASEM III summit in Seoul (October 2000) in the Asia-Europe Cooperation Framework (AECF) and calls on the Commission, the Council and the Member States to make them effective;
  4. Highlights the importance, for the EU, of promoting democracy and the rule of law and calls, therefore, for any progress within the ASEM process on economic dialogue to be accompanied by progress on political dialogue in order to ensure respect for democratic principles in all of the countries involved in the process;
  5. Acknowledges that the ASEM process, to date, has proved its worth as a forum for contact and active and constructive dialogue, but considers that dialogue between the EU and Asia should be stepped up to enable the process to advance;
  6. Considers that in order to pursue the objectives of the ASEM process, it is important to ensure compliance with the agreements adopted at Asia-Europe meetings; calls on the Commission therefore to carry out a study prior to each meeting to ascertain the extent to which commitments made to date have been fulfilled and that it inform Parliament accordingly;
  7. Urges the Members of the ASEM process to continue and to intensify the political dialogue on human rights, democracy and the rule of law so that the common basis for the cooperation among the Member States and towards third countries will be strengthened;
  8. Calls on the Council and Commission to undertake joint actions in international forums, especially the UN, to promote peace, disarmament, consolidation of human rights, and defence of the rule of law;

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9. Calls on the Council Presidency to ensure that consideration of the progress made in the field of human rights, democracy and the rule of law is entered on the agenda for each ASEM summit;
10. Calls on the responsible ASEM leaders at all levels to exclude any State as a member or observer from participation in summits, meetings or programmes if that State does not respect human rights, democracy and the rule of law;
11. Welcomes the political, economic and cultural priorities of the ASEM III summit in Seoul, and in particular:
  - the intention to further develop ASEM dialogue and cooperation in the areas of arms control, disarmament and non proliferation of weapons of mass-destruction;
  - ASEM's commitment to global issues of common concern such as migratory flows, the fight against transnational crime, illegal drug trafficking, international terrorism and piracy, racism and xenophobia as well as the welfare of women and children, health care improvement, food security and supply;
12. Calls on the Council and the Commission to adopt comprehensive measures which will enable effective action to be taken against the main infectious diseases (AIDS, tuberculosis, etc.) which ravage the countries concerned;
13. Calls on the Council and the Commission to ensure that measures are adopted which will safeguard the rights of women, prevent sex discrimination and combat female prostitution;
14. Highlights the importance, when setting new objectives and priorities, of the common principles of the fight against poverty, good governance and respect for fundamental rights and the environment and for the world trade order;
15. Calls on the Commission to present a new proposal for the preparation for the ASEM IV summit to be held in Copenhagen in 2002 as a follow-up to its working document 'Perspectives and Priorities for the ASEM Process into the new decade', taking into account the positive and negative aspects of the ASEM III summit as well as the following proposals from the European Parliament;
16. Considers that the two regions must coordinate their efforts to achieve broader social dialogue encompassing subjects such as sustainable development and the protection of the environment, as well as employment, child labour and social security; considers, furthermore, that the ASEM governments must respect the trade union rights of workers;
17. Calls on the Council and Commission to support action to ensure compliance with ILO agreements and resolutions on the protection of free and democratic trade-unionism, wage guarantees, collective bargaining, and workers' rights;
18. Calls on the Commission and Council to intensify their efforts with a view to the enlargement of ASEM to the other countries of Asia, particularly India, and also to consider the possibility of opening the process up to Australia and New Zealand;
19. Recommends that the political pillar of the ASEM process should include a comprehensive approach on conflict prevention and peace keeping, e.g. supporting political dialogue between North and South Korea, as well as between the People's Republic of China and Taiwan on the question of Taiwan;
20. Emphasises the political importance of the Seoul Declaration for Peace on the Korean Peninsula, which it endorses in its entirety, and hopes that all European and Asian members of ASEM will continue to support the efforts of the leaders of the two Koreas to take further steps to bring the two countries closer together;
21. Calls on all those involved in the ASEM process to engage in an intensive political dialogue on the situation in the Middle East, the situation in Afghanistan and the internal ethnic and religious conflicts in Asia, in particular in Indonesia, Sri Lanka and India;

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22. Takes the view that after years of showering praise on China's demographic policy, the EU must now denounce unequivocally the total ineffectiveness of this policy and the tragedy it has represented and continues to represent in terms of fundamental rights;
  23. Emphasises that the economic pillar of the ASEM process should be strengthened by common endeavours by all ASEM countries to bring about stability in the financial markets as well as to improve the WTO process, and highlights the central role of the Asian-Europe Business Forum in this development;
  24. Emphasises the need for the Heads of State and Government of the ASEM countries to join together in their efforts to reform the international financial framework in order to prevent, in the future, financial crises such as that which affected South-East Asia;
  25. Emphasises the importance and mutual interest for the EU and for the ASEM countries of close cooperation on issues related to the Trade Facilitation Action Plan (TFAP) and the Investment Promotion Action Plan (IPAP), and the need to promote initiatives in this respect;
  26. Stresses the need to promote specific measures to increase dialogue and cooperation between undertakings from both regions, notably in those sectors which will play a key role in the coming decade;
  27. Invites the Council and its Member States to grant visas to the President and the Government of Taiwan to enable them to carry out private visits to the European Union;
  28. Takes the view that the cultural pillar of the ASEM process will greatly benefit from a broader dialogue among the civil societies of the ASEM Members and from an extended people-to-people exchange;
  29. Welcomes the commitment made in Seoul for a five-fold increase in student exchanges between the two regions in the next ten years and considers that such exchanges should allow traineeships in undertakings;
  30. Calls for ASEF's work programme to respect these priorities and to include representatives of the social partners; calls on ASEF to develop programmes concerning the situation of women;
  31. Calls on the ASEM States to adhere to the Kyoto Protocol and rapidly bring this into force in their countries;
  32. Notes the work of the Asia-Europe Environmental Technology Centre (AEETC) which opened in Thailand in 1999, and suggests that this area should be a main priority in the ASEM process and could play a key role in galvanising global action;
  33. Supports increased dialogue in the field of science and technological development in accordance with the conclusions of the Peking ASEM ministerial conference, and in the field of new technologies;
  34. Calls for adoption of the necessary measures to implement the decisions adopted in Seoul in relation to the creation of a Trans-Eurasian information network;
  35. Favours increased parliamentary cooperation within ASEM as the cornerstone of political dialogue and draws attention, in this regard, to its demand for the role of the European Parliament and the Asian parliaments in the ASEM process to be clearly defined;
  36. Calls for the political dialogue in support of the ASEM process between Parliament and the Parliaments of the Asian countries to continue through the convening of the Second Asia-Europe Parliamentary Meeting (ASEP II) in Asia before the ASEM IV Heads of State summit in Europe in 2002;
  37. Instructs its President to forward this Resolution to the Council and Commission and the Governments and Parliaments of the Member States and the ASEM countries.
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