



THE COMPASS DAILY



ASEM 2008: The Sequel What came before...

The last Model ASEM conference was held in Manila, Philippines, on 28 February 2007.

The key word of the Model ASEM 2007 was 'HUMAN RIGHTS'. The participants regarded this issue with the utmost value among the other issues discussed. As the conference was held in Philippines, a developing country still striving for a democratic consolidation and political maturity, all participants were well aware that issues such as human rights violations and unaccountability of the government still pervade the system.

In the 'Manila Model ASEM Declaration on Strengthening Civil Societies and Promoting Human Rights', all participants declared that,

- 1) different countries participating in the ASEM process mutually respect each other's views in promoting human rights;
- 2) there is a need for strengthening the role of civil society organizations with governments in engaging the problem of human rights violations;
- 3) there is a need to give emphasis on the process of constructively engaging with the problem of human rights violations instead of focus-

ing on output-oriented approaches.

The dynamics of the ASEM proves to be an insightful experience especially during the deliberations for the declarations. It was quite surprising to see people these young to be involved in such matters where heads of states cannot even agree on,' said Gianna Gayle Amul, media representative in Model ASEM Manila.

The Model ASEM 2007 was co-organised by the ASEF University Alumni Network and the Department of Political Science at the University of the Philippines Diliman, in support of the Asia-Europe Foundation.

-LS-

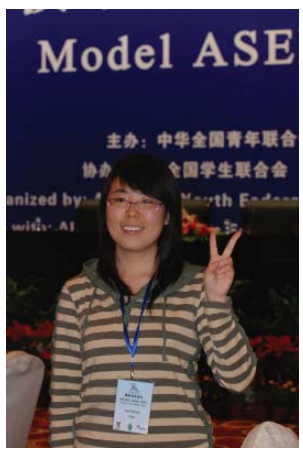


Table of Contents

Voices of the People.....p.2

Quotes and Fun.....p.3

Exploring Beijingp.3

Snapshots.....p.4

Editorial.....p.6

“Believe those who are seeking the truth; doubt those who find it.”
Andre Gide



- Letters from our Readers -

Yes Hello and guten Tag to the People at the Compass Daily,

I would like to ask you where the needle of YOUR Compass is pointing? After your last feature about the Oktoberfest or Beerfestival in Munich, Germany, I cannot help thinking that you are on the payroll of the alcohol industry. If I would actually abase myself to join such a lowly crowd on the Festival, I probably would find the editor of the Compass in Lederhosen or a Dirndle (or both) drinking Krug after Krug of free Pilsner Beer, eh?

Claiming that Beer can actually be good for you, especially if drunk on a daily basis, is an outrageous crime. Now what if the students in school start sipping beer from their flasks during break time?! You are corrupting the world's youth by publishing such lies, and don't give me anything about the "folate" or "tryglicerides" of beer nutrition, there are no such things. Trying to fool people through science makes the matter so much worse. You cannot use fancy words as an excuse for a whole nation getting drunk, all in the name of health. Our brains are slowly deteriorating, and I believe you are partaking in a global conspiracy to dumb down the populations. Paris Hilton, Some Country's Next Top Model, the PISA Test, Hitler as a wax figure in Madame Tousseuds – all of these terrible things could never have happened if not for the pacifying influence of Beer. We have to put a stop to this cult of the poisonous golden nectar! I call for an Oktoberfest boycott.

Günther Gratiss
Münchhausen, Germany



Note from the editor: We are glad to see what a cultured and intellectual readership we have, and we refute the accusation of being on anyone's payroll (The Bush Administration doesn't count, right? That's for Oil, not Beer.)*. Still, would someone please go on http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_conspiracy_theories and add this new entry? Thank you.

*please do not take this comment seriously

INFOBOX

"The Oktoberfest is a sixteen-day festival held each year in Munich, Bavaria, Germany during late September (and running to early October). It is one of the most famous events in the city and the world's largest fair, with some six million people attending every year, and is an important part of Bavarian culture. Other cities across the world also hold Oktoberfest celebrations, modeled after the Munich event."

Oktoberfestbiers are the beers that have been served at the event in Munich since 1818, and are supplied by 6 breweries known as the Big Six. Lederhosen (leather pants) and Dirndle (dress) are the Boverian national costumes.

S o u n d b i t e s



"ASEM is like the Olympics of international relations"
European Commission representative

"They underestimated me."
Bushisms, quoting George Bush Nov. 6, 2000

"ASEFUAN is an association of stones that want to get better." and "you are the stones which make the 3rd edition of Model ASEM",

Dani Madrid said today during the opening ceremony, picking up on the metaphor of Mr. Molina. We just have to watch out that we dont GET stoned!



(Contrary to what you've always believed, for us your opinions DO matter! The Compass looks forward to increased input during the next few days, as we will be covering the event of the year, ASEM 2008, in full detail. Any observations, be they astoundingly academic, fascinatingly controversial or outrageously entertaining, are welcome. Please send your comments to "ehorhager@gmail.com", or have it sent by courier to the Press-room at 80625 GuiDu Hotel Beijing.)

“Quotation marks”

Exploring Beijing

“I’ve participated in other model conferences before, where conflicts between representatives were somehow furious. ASEM Summit is known for its informality, thus I’m looking forward to a more moderate yet fruitful discussion.”

-ZHENG Tianxiang, Chinese, rep. Belgium

“We try to present our foreign friends an overview of Beijing where traditional culture and modernization meet each other. During the culture programme, participants will have a chance to watch the Beijing Opera and Taiji performances.”

-WANG Ruoying, organizer, Tsinghua University

“I just arrived 4 hours ago. Well... My first impression on Beijing is that it’s a modern city. This is the first time I have visited Eastern Asia and I look forward to the culture programme on Saturday.”

-Henrik Lindbo Larsen, Danish, rep. Singapore

“I came here on Saturday to explore the city. I’ve visited Tian An Men Square and went to see the Great Wall on Monday.”

-Tamil Selvan Muthu, Indian, rep. Sweden



Having a little laugh...!



The *Award* for **THE MOST PERSONAL INPUT** goes to...

tom_be (Tom Van den Steen) from Myanmar, who posted 21% of the posts in the Open Forum, and 1.33 posts per day AND a political position paper on the S in SD (Sustainable Development) (shame on all the lazy delegates who didn’t do that extra work...) and therefore also receives today’s award

for being **THE MOST SUSTAINABLE GUY**. All the girls who were declared single during the Icebreaker: isn’t this a good trait in men?

And don’t worry, because his response to any (idealistic) partnership requests will be: “Crazy idealism? Let’s do it!”

Quotes from the Icebreaker

“Now she is looking for her head from Thailand.”

- Wang Bog (Lithuania) about his fellow delegate “Nut” Nutaporn Vititviriyakul

“He told me several times that Vienna University is the best Uni in Austria”

- Ethan Feng Yuchen (Greece) about Gregor Novak (Malaysia)

“Gratz Uni is smaller than Vienna but far more select”

- Frederik Ponjaeck (Japan) about the above quote and Ramona Heuberger (ASEAN secretariat)

(After the Gong) **“She told me she likes China and I am very proud!”**

- Chen Lin (Slovenia) about Mateja Peter (Lao PDR) and her enthusiasm about China

Compass Snapshot



Dani the Ringo

Ringo Starr, MBE (born Richard Starkey on 7 July 1940) is an English musician, singer, songwriter and actor, best known as the drummer for The Beatles. He was the last to join the "Fab Four" line up and is also the oldest member in the band (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dani_Madrid).



King of the Hill

"Youth is the only hope for our future," said Ramon Molina during his initial speech. We proudly present the best and brightest "hope" of all.



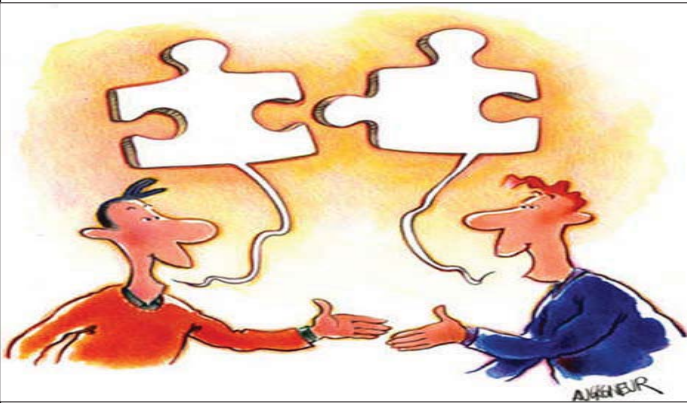
Drowsyhead

"I wasn't really asleep I was just meditating on unconsciousness."

Matchmaker

She is smart, she has the prettiest smile and she is single. Who is in? Is there a brave prince who will reach her high expectations?

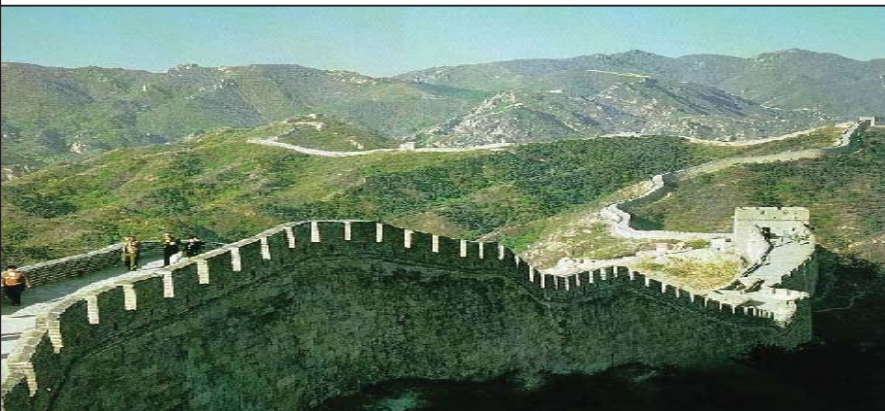




Quote of the Day

“ASEM has been accused to be just a talk shop and not for taking concrete action. Therefore, I urge you as young, open-minded people to try to think more innovatively and freely than the civil servants and leaders who have heavy political burdens behind them, to concentrate on concrete issues in your speeches. Statements are important of course, but is there some concrete proposals you could also come up with? Do you think ASEM could do more on these issues? The proposals have to be realistic of course, but that doesn't mean that we couldn't try to figure what these countries could actually (in an ideal world) do by joining their forces and putting enough political will to it.”

- Eirene Elise Leino: China, Political Pillar



Climbing the Great Wall of International Cooperation Together

ASEM-Sudoku
This is the easy one, for easily distracted readers. Use all the practice you can get, for as the debates warm up and the discussions get more tiresome, ASEM-Sudoku will become harder and harder!

ASEM - Sudoku

			7				9	
		9		3			6	
8			6			4	3	2
7					3	6		
	2			7			5	
		8	5					7
9	8	1			7			6
	4			9		2		
	6				5			

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E D I T O R I A L

Beijing - Shoes banging on conference tables and daggers made not of steel but of words flying through the air: international conferences can often be nerve-racking and are always full of conflict. Even so, it is often on the roller coaster of international events where the most groundbreaking moves towards international cooperation actually take place. These are the rare times when all – or, at least most --of the relevant players are at the same fairground. Naturally, in such extraordinary situations, expectations are high, even unattainably so. It makes me think of the anecdote Mr. Annan tells about his first days as General Secretary of the United Nations (UN). Responding to his statement that, regrettably, he hadn't yet been able to reform the whole UN in his first week, the Russian Delegate suavely asked the question: "Why not? God managed to create the world in seven days!"

In light of this potential for dramatic conflict, it's no surprise that UN meetings and G8 summits are followed by the world's media eyes. And us? Where does ASEM fit in? Let us not turn cowardly at the thought of past failures to find the key to world peace. We at ASEM have assets other official groups don't have. The strengths of the ASEM meetings include friendly informality, open-mindedness, and cooperation. Intimacy and flexibility are present in the very structure of the Europe-Asia forum. We can hope to accomplish a lot of dialogue and exchange in these four days, especially if we do not imagine we can heroically solve all of earth's problems.

And yet the strengths of ASEM could at the same time be its weaknesses. In real life at such international conferences, there just happens to be a lot of tension between many of the participating countries and for many reasons,

be they more or less logical. Let us hope that the ASEM delegates won't lose their heads in the cloudy sky of cooperation and will keep the real conflicts in view. An open exchange doesn't necessarily have to mean tiptoeing around all of the controversial issues. And, of course, the editors are looking forward to a lot of publishable material. In the end, we can say only this: **give us honest discussion, give us sincere engagement, give us ASEM 2008!**

EH