



## **Chair's Summary on the Seventh ASEM Conference on Counter-Terrorism Manila, Philippines**

**22-23 June 2009**

1. The 7th ASEM Conference on Counter-Terrorism was held in Manila, Philippines on 22-23 June 2009. The Conference was guided by the ASEM Copenhagen Declaration on Cooperation against International Terrorism adopted at the 4<sup>th</sup> ASEM Summit and built on the results of previous ASEM Conferences on Counter-Terrorism held in Beijing (2003), Berlin (2004), Semarang (2005), Copenhagen (2006), Tokyo (2007), and Madrid (2008). Participants were representatives from ASEM partners as well as counter-terrorism institutions: the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (UN-CTED), UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UN-ODC), Interpol and the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO).

2. The Conference was opened by Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita, Chairperson of the Anti-Terrorism Council of the Philippines. The Conference was chaired by Mr. Ricardo Blancaflor, Undersecretary of the Department of Justice and Spokesperson of the Anti-Terrorism Council of the Philippines. The Conference was hosted by the Philippines with the support of Belgium, China, Denmark, Germany, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, the Netherlands, Spain and Thailand as co-sponsors. The Conference focused on enhancing the capacities of ASEM partner countries to prevent and combat terrorism especially with relation to the transportation sector.

3. The Conference discussed existing and potential terrorist threats to ASEM partners as well as measures implemented to address them. The Conference noted the gains made in combating terrorism even as it recognized that terrorism continues to threaten peace, security and development in Asia, Europe and the rest of the international community. The Conference voiced its solidarity with the ASEM partners, Pakistan in particular, who are in the forefront of the global [fight](#) against terrorism. The Conference strongly condemned recent terrorist attacks, and repudiated terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. The Conference recognized that terrorism emanates from a complex set of factors, inter alia: perceived international injustice, poverty, underdevelopment and extremism, but strongly rejected any association between terrorism and a specific religion, race, nationality, or ethnic group. Furthermore, the Conference underlined that acts of terrorism cannot simply be addressed by words alone, but more importantly through concrete and concerted action.

4. The Conference identified emerging trends in the fight against terrorism. The Conference noted the changing nature and tactics of terrorist groups. The Conference observed the new face of terrorism: younger, more mobile, resourceful and motivated. The Conference identified the significant contributions of transnational organized crime, narcotics trafficking, weapons smuggling, as well as money laundering for terrorism. The Conference considered the

emergence of the Internet as a powerful medium for the dissemination of propaganda: to radicalize, indoctrinate and recruit, as well as infiltrate and disrupt systems to carry out terrorist objectives and facilitate terrorist attacks. The Conference acknowledged traditional law enforcement, intelligence gathering and information exchange, as well as effective media campaigns, as indispensable in the fight against terrorism. The Conference suggested that ASEM members develop constructive, creative and non-conventional strategies to prevent and combat terrorism, including enhanced inter-faith dialogue, de-radicalization programmes, and the positive involvement of the media in nurturing understanding and tolerance. The Conference emphasized the positive role, which can be played by civil society, religious leaders and the media in effectively preventing radicalization.

5. The Conference recognized the United Nations leading role in the fight against terrorism and reaffirmed its support for the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and the further institutionalization of the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force. Guided by the 7<sup>th</sup> ASEM Summit in Beijing in 2008 and the 9<sup>th</sup> ASEM Foreign Ministers' Meeting in Hanoi in May 2009, the Conference also underlined support for the September 2008 Review of the UN Global Strategy against Terrorism. The Conference recognized the important work done by the UN Secretary-General including the 8 July 2008 Report on the Activities of the United Nations System in implementing the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. The Conference further stated the importance of a comprehensive approach by the international community to fight terrorism, carried out in accordance with international law, and the UN Charter in particular, with full respect for human rights and international humanitarian law. While it remains the primary responsibility of states to implement the UN Global Strategy, the Conference emphasized that ASEM and other international, regional, subregional organizations and fora play a key role in the dissemination of best practices and the implementation of the Strategy through increased coordination with the UN. The Conference also welcomed the completion of the UNODC model law on counter-terrorism. The Chair noted that sovereignty and territorial integrity be fully respected while engaging in cooperation.

6. The Conference emphasized the need to broaden and enhance mutual understanding among cultures and civilizations and, for this purpose, to promote interfaith, intercultural, and inter-civilization dialogue among ASEM partners as well as the international community. The Conference recognized the importance of the ASEM Interfaith Dialogue, the Alliance of Civilizations, the Tripartite Interfaith Forum and welcomed the hosting of the Philippines of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) Special Ministerial Meeting on Interfaith Dialogue in December 2009 as efforts to address the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism. The Conference highlighted the importance of efforts to prevent radicalization and support the victims of terrorism. The Conference underscored the importance of strengthening capacity-building efforts of the states through increased cooperation and provision of technical assistance. Towards this end, the role of the UN and enhanced public-private partnership was also emphasized. The Conference reiterated that a peaceful resolution to prolonged unresolved conflicts can also contribute to the global fight against terrorism.

7. The Conference acknowledged the diverse legal frameworks of ASEM partner countries in dealing with terrorism while observing the rule of law and human rights in conformity with the principles of international law and the United Nations Charter. The Conference noted continuing efforts by ASEM partner countries to update and enhance their respective domestic legal

systems to respond effectively to the threat of terrorism. The Conference also explored the possibility of cooperation between and among ASEM partners towards the development of an ASEM-wide inter-regional counter-terrorism cooperation framework.

8. The Conference noted the work undertaken during the ASEM Capacity Building Workshop on Maritime Customs, Immigration, Quarantine and Security (CIQS) on 8-9 June 2009 in Manila. The Conference underlined the importance of a comprehensive approach by the international community comprising political, economic, diplomatic, legal and other means, while fully respecting the rule of law.

9. The Conference shared national experiences of ASEM partners to ensure the security of maritime, air, and land transportation systems. The following key issues were discussed:

- Terrorist groups are increasing in their level of sophistication, and are rapidly adapting to the measures pursued by government authorities. As a result, governments must remain vigilant and must continually update and adjust their security measures, such as through the use of new technology. The pursuit of research in the areas of detection and identification of explosives and chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear (CBRN) substances should be encouraged among ASEM partners;
- There is a need to further enhance and sustain information exchange on counter-terrorism—related issues within the ASEM and UN frameworks, with a view to strengthening international cooperation to prevent terrorist attacks;
- ASEM partners explored international conventions related to transport and counter-terrorism as well as their implementation through national legislation;
- ASEM partners should explore cooperation with one another, based on the principles of mutual respect, mutual benefit, equality, and international law;
- Prevention is viewed as a key tool to addressing terrorist threats. As a result, emphasis must be given on improving intelligence gathering and analysis. Since counter-terrorism activities are shared by multiple agencies, it was suggested that inter-agency coordination be optimized and it was suggested that ASEM partners share best practices;
- Emphasis was given to the importance of existing international law and standards in the areas of maritime and aviation security, and the need to realize greater harmonization between ASEM partners. International standards, such as those of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and the International Maritime Organization (IMO), provide necessary benchmarks to ensure that adequate safeguards are put in place. In this respect, internationally accepted standards are crucial. National regulatory authorities should undertake regular reviews and audits of their respective security programs;
- A fine balance must be struck between addressing security concerns and ensuring the orderly and efficient facilitation of the lawful movement of persons and goods;

- The link between transnational organized crime and international terrorism and the grave threat posed by piracy in the Gulf of Aden, West Africa and other areas was explored. Further cooperation on the issue of maritime security and piracy was encouraged among ASEM partners, through the sharing of best practices;
- To ensure the sustainable and secure flow of goods, further cooperation must be encouraged at the domestic level between government authorities and the transport industry as well as other stakeholders. Due to the informal nature, there is also scope for enhancing public-private partnerships within the context of ASEM; and
- It is also suggested that authorities also focus their efforts in reaching out to media and the public. An important area where terrorism prevention can be strengthened in the field of public awareness through the pursuit of public information campaigns.

10. The Conference expressed support for the work of different regional and international organizations and countries to provide technical assistance and identify gaps in member-states' counter-terrorism capabilities. The Conference recognized the importance of the work developed by the ASEAN, European Union, UNODC and other international and regional organizations to provide technical assistance and strengthen national systems against terrorism. The work of the Counter-Terrorism Executive Directorate as a facilitator of technical assistance was also recognized.

11. The Conference accepted the fact that fighting international terrorism is a long-term endeavor, and thus the Conference explored the possibility that the following steps continue to be taken by ASEM member countries:

- that an ASEM framework for counter-terrorism containing general principles in promoting counter-terrorism be formulated with a view to have a more coordinated approach in global forums;
- that specific benchmarks be proposed at the next ASEM Counter-Terrorism Conference. These benchmarks may include but will not be limited to enhanced information sharing, and updates on existing international and domestic legal frameworks;
- share information on technical assistance schemes so as to enhance assistance cooperation between ASEM member countries as well as support the work by UN agencies in facilitating technical assistance in order for states to meet the requirements set out in the UN Security Council's Resolution 1373 (2003);
- enhance cooperation through information sharing and capacity building at national, regional, and international levels towards the promotion of a comprehensive counter-terrorism response, including through regional counter-terrorism centers;
- support the full implementation of the Global Strategy on Counter-Terrorism in close cooperation with the United Nations Secretariat;
- continue efforts to address conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism, including poverty and lack of education, while promoting the peaceful settlement of conflicts,

respect for human rights, the rule of law, and the promote interfaith, intercultural, and inter-civilization dialogue

- study ways to further operationalize the ASEM counter-terrorism work including issues of transport security; and
- call for the ratification and implementation of all the existing international conventions and protocols on fighting terrorism.

12. The 8th ASEM Conference on Counter-Terrorism will be held in Europe in 2010. The results of the Conference will be presented to the next ASEM Summit, in Brussels, Belgium in 2010. In the meantime, the Philippines will serve as the temporary secretariat for the next six months to oversee the follow-up actions of this Conference.