
Proposal for Drafting a Ministerial Declaration of the 6th ASEM Education Ministers' Meeting in 2017

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The 1st Senior Officials' Meeting for the 6th ASEM Education Ministers' Meeting

Background

For the first 10 years, the ASEM Education Ministers' Meeting (ASEMME) has opened a new horizon in Asian and European regions by promoting 'Connectivity in Education' along with economic and social connectivity. Especially, it resulted in launching the ASEM Education Process, which connects countries and stakeholders in the two regions and encourage them to make a commitment to the development of education as a channel of dialogue.

For sharing our achievements and directing our next steps, it is critical to produce official documents adopted at the ASEM Education Process. Particularly, 'Conclusions by the Chair' presents the outcomes what we have accomplished and the rationales for them. With help from the ASEM Education Secretariat, we could have the Stocktaking Reports and ASEM Education Gazette. They have also served as good guides for us to grasp current situation and consider required policies and actions since 2009.

Now, we are ready to commemorate the 10th year for the ASEMME and need to jointly response to changes and challenges of the next decade at the same time. In line with connectivity in education, we need to take well-harmonized cooperation among ASEM partners more than before. Beyond the last 10 years, the ASEM Education Ministers will go down in history as unfolding new strategies, and their decisions can envision the next decade in the Asian and European regions and support our cooperative activities.

The Ulaanbaatar Declaration, which has been issued at the 11th ASEM Summit (ASEM 2016), also focuses on 'fostering connectivity in all its dimensions,' dimensions absolutely including the three pillars of ASEM : political, economic, and social, cultural and education pillar. That Declaration envisions the future of ASEM in the third decade.

In this connection, the ASEMME6 is timely and relevant to present new directions and approaches. For continuity and scalability of the outcomes of the ASEMME6, it is required to consider carrying out a Ministerial-level document for all ASEM partners. Thus, the Republic of Korea would like to propose ASEM partners to carry out a Ministerial Declaration tentatively entitled 'Seoul Declaration.' This Ministerial Declaration is for enhancing connectivity and partnership between Asia and Europe, presenting future-oriented perspectives between ASEM partners and stakeholders, upholding the legacy of ASEMME for better future of Education in the Asia and Europe.

Objective

This paper proposes that ASEM Partners and Stakeholders agree on drafting and adopting the Ministerial Declaration tentatively named Seoul Declaration and suggests a provisional approach including process, schedule, and targeted participants.

Overall Approach and Main Areas of Work (proposed)

This proposal is of help for ASEM partners and stakeholders to understand preliminary activities and process for carrying out the Ministerial Declaration. The following proposed scheme can be discussed and coordinated at the SOM1 and in the process of the preparation of the ASEMME6.

1. Overall Approach

After the 1st Senior Officials' Meeting (SOM1), a Working Group (or Draft Committee) for drafting the Ministerial Declaration will be launched and invite the ASEM partners and stakeholders who can make a commitment to carrying out the Ministerial Declaration. Based on joint working process, the participants of the Working Group (or Draft Committee) are required to make a draft of the Ministerial Declaration. The draft will be circulated among ASEM partners and stakeholders whenever the draft is produced and updated. The Working Group (or Draft Committee) will be responsible for making the draft of the Ministerial Declaration, taking care of comments and feedbacks from ASEM partners and stakeholders, and finalizing the draft of the declaration to the 6th ASEM Education Ministers' Meeting.

2. Proposed Objectives of the Declaration

(1) To celebrate the past decade and the next decade, following the Helsinki Declaration on the Future of ASEM (2006), and the Ulaanbaatar Declaration on ASEM into the Third Decade (2016), the Declaration – maybe called *Seoul Declaration* – would include the followings:

- Recognizing the growing weight of connectivity among Asia and Europe especially in education.

- Reaffirming the necessity to continue and promote connectivity between Asia and Europe.
- Re-emphasizing the importance of promoting informality, networking, and flexibility within ASEM.

(2) To envision the coming decade in ASEM Education Process, *Seoul Declaration* would include the followings:

- **Vision**
 - Fulfilling ASEM Education Process
 - Joint Response to New Changes and Challenges
- **Way to Achieve the Vision**
 - Effectively Fulfilling the Vision
- **The Importance of ASEM Education Process**
 - Value of ASEM Education Process

3. Proposed Participants in the Preparation

The Declaration is open to all ASEM partners and stakeholders because the declaration belongs not to one or two countries, but to all ASEM partners and stakeholders.

4. Proposed Timelines

- (1) **SOM1, 9-10 November 2016** – The presentation of the plan of Seoul Declaration.
- (2) **End of December 2016** – Launching the Draft Committee
- (3) **End of January 2017** – The first draft of the declaration.
- (4) **End of February 2017** – Comments from ASEM partners and stakeholders
- (5) **End of March 2017** – The second draft of the declaration.
- (6) **End of April 2017** – Comments and the third draft of the declaration.
- (7) **ASEMME6, 9-10 May 2017** – Agreement on *Seoul Declaration*.

As you may know, the preparation of the declaration would need close collaboration among ASEM partners and stakeholders. Hence, the close attention and active participation of ASEM partners and stakeholders would be highly appreciated.

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