

(Translation)

Towards Greater Asia-Europe Cooperation

Address by H.E. Wen Jiabao
Premier of the State Council of the People's Republic of China
At the Opening Ceremony of the Eighth ASEM Summit

Brussels, 4 October 2010

Mr. Herman Van Rompuy, President of the European Council,
Mr. Yves Leterme, Prime Minister of Belgium,
Dear Colleagues,

It gives me great pleasure to meet you here in Brussels. I want to thank our host Belgium for the thoughtful arrangements. I also want to express a warm welcome to Australia, New Zealand and Russia, our new ASEM partners.

In October 2008, when a full-blown international financial crisis was breaking out and spreading fast, we held the Seventh ASEM Summit in Beijing and issued a statement on the international financial situation. It sent a strong message to the world that all of us would come together and rise to the challenge with great confidence. Over the past two years, countries in Asia and Europe and around the world have made concerted efforts to counter the financial crisis, and achieved notable results. Today, although the pace and momentum of recovery vary from country to country, the world economy as a whole is slowly recovering. We are soberly aware of the many uncertainties existing in this process. The underlying impacts of the international financial crisis are yet to be removed, and there are countries plagued by such problems as high unemployment, sluggish growth or rising sovereign debt risks. It is therefore highly significant for ASEM leaders to gather together at this critical juncture and explore ways to achieve a strong and sustainable recovery of the world economy.

ASEM cooperation now stands at a new historical starting point and faces new development opportunities. Asia has a large population and huge market potential. It is the fastest-growing and most vibrant region in the global economy. The EU is the world's largest economy with advanced science and technology and a well-developed market. It is a world trendsetter in many fields. With the joining of Australia, New

Zealand and Russia, ASEM partners have formed a close-knit community of interests, covering the entire Eurasian continent from east to west. The 48 ASEM partners account for about 60% of the world's population and trade and over 50% of the global economy. This has made Asia-Europe cooperation all the more important and its scope even broader. We must seize the opportunities, keep up with the times, and take solid steps to advance Asia-Europe cooperation from a strategic and long-term perspective.

First, we must work together to promote world economic growth. We should intensify macroeconomic policy coordination, manage with caution the timing and pace of an exit strategy from economic stimulus, and keep the exchange rates of major reserve currencies relatively stable. We should build on our achievements to ensure steady recovery of the world economy. At the same time, it is important to think for the long run. We need to promote economic restructuring, gradually remove the systemic and structural risks, enhance fiscal sustainability, and build internal drivers of economic growth.

Second, we must work together to reform the international economic and financial systems. Global economic governance reform is of fundamental importance in overcoming the financial crisis, and we must explore ways to establish a more effective global economic governance system. We need to improve the decision-making process and mechanism of the international financial institutions, increase the representation and voice of developing countries, encourage wider participation, and fully accommodate each other's interests and concerns. We should step up cooperation on international financial supervision and regulation. We must be steadfast in advocating and supporting free trade, resolutely oppose protectionism, and work for early, equitable and balanced outcomes of the Doha Round negotiations on the basis of the existing text.

Third, we must work together to address major global challenges. We must make concerted efforts to meet the climate challenge under the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities. We should pay equal attention to economic development and environmental protection, actively engage in cooperation in clean energy, energy conservation and environmental protection, and develop a green economy. We should foster and follow a new energy security concept that calls for win-win cooperation, diverse forms of development and common energy security through coordinated supply. It is important to stabilize energy prices, curb excessive speculation and ensure energy supply to all countries,

developing countries in particular. We must jointly fight terrorism and piracy to maintain maritime transport safety and normal trade between Asia and Europe. We need to strengthen cooperation and learn from each other in disaster preparedness and reduction so as to minimize the threat of natural disasters to the lives and property of our people.

Fourth, we must work together to facilitate exchanges and mutual learning among civilizations. Cultural exchanges play an important role in advancing human progress. There is a long tradition of mutual learning between the Asian and European civilizations. Both the Eastern learning spreading westward and the Western learning spreading eastward have contributed to the prosperity and progress of the two civilizations. There exist diverse civilizations and religious beliefs. We should embrace such diversity and respect their difference. We must also respect different development models and the right of all countries to independently choose their development paths. We should promote inclusiveness, draw on each other's strength and live in harmony. It is necessary to give stronger support to the Asia-Europe Foundation and enable it to play an even bigger role in strengthening academic, cultural and people-to-people exchanges between Asia and Europe.

Fifth, we must work together to uphold peace and stability in Asia and Europe. The people of Asia and Europe value peace most, because our continent was repeatedly ravaged by wars in the past. ASEM partners believe in multilateralism and are important forces for the maintenance of world peace and stability. We should adhere to the purposes and principles of the *Charter of the United Nations*, intensify political interactions and strategic coordination, and enhance mutual understanding and trust. We should vigorously advocate a philosophy that values peace above everything else, seek peaceful solutions to regional hot-spot issues, put an end to turmoil and warfare, and lay the foundation for long-term prosperity.

China is firmly committed to Asia-Europe cooperation. Since the inception of ASEM, China has shown strong resolve to encourage political dialogue, economic cooperation and cultural exchanges among the partners. Our aim is to seek common ground while reserving differences and build consensus. China is fully engaged in Asia-Europe practical cooperation across the board. We have held nearly 40 ASEM events, and we proposed cooperation between Asia and Europe in such areas as science and technology, small and medium-sized enterprises, the environment, customs, justice and counter-terrorism in order to open up new horizons for Asia-Europe cooperation. To further facilitate

Asia-Europe practical cooperation, I wish to make the following four-point proposal on behalf of the Chinese government: First, establish the ASEM Water Resource Research and Development Center to enhance our water resources management capacity and promote sustainable development through cooperation in related science and technology. Second, convene the Second ASEM Transport Ministers' Meeting and deepen Asia-Europe transport cooperation to facilitate the flow of people and goods. Third, hold the ASEM High-level Forum on Sustainable Forestry Management to Address Climate Change and push forward practical cooperation in forestry. And fourth, hold the ASEM Symposium on Technical and Vocational Education to strengthen our exchanges and cooperation in improving the knowledge and skills of workers. Going forward, China will continue to contribute its share to strengthening and deepening the new Asia-Europe partnership.

Dear Colleagues,

The past 14 years of cooperation between Asia and Europe has demonstrated that trust comes from dialogue and cooperation leads to win-win outcomes. In the face of the severe international financial crisis, we pulled together and acted in unity. On the way toward global economic recovery, we must continue to help each other and move forward hand-in-hand. Let us work together to shape a prosperous and harmonious future for Asia and Europe.

Thank you.