

Summary of the ASEM Seminar on Capacity Building on Air Pollution Prevention and Control

(Beijing, 22-23 October 2013)

1. The ASEM Seminar on Capacity Building on Air Pollution Prevention and Control was held in Beijing, China on 22-23 October 2013. The Seminar was hosted by China and co-sponsored by Singapore and Switzerland. It was attended by nearly 90 government officials, experts, scientists, and practitioners from 18 ASEM partners as well as representatives from United Nations Environment Programme, and the Asia-Europe Foundation(ASEF).

2. Mr. Tang Dingding, Director General, Department of International Cooperation, Ministry of Environmental Protection, China, delivered an opening speech, highlighting the need for joint efforts by ASEM partners to protect environment and pursue sustainable development. He encouraged further exchange of policies, technology cooperation and environmental industrial collaboration between ASEM partners and China. Participants noted the *Action Plan on Air Pollution Prevention and Treatment* released by the Chinese Government on 12 September 2013.

3. Participants held comprehensive, in-depth and fruitful discussions on three topics: policy in air pollution prevention and control, comprehensive air monitoring technology and measures, and air pollution prevention, control and reduction technology.

4. Participants shared the view that air pollution has become a serious problem facing the international community, which not only threatens human health, but also damages the environment and impedes sustainable development. With the increase of population and rapid development of industrialization and urbanization, it brings more pressure upon the capability of ASEM partners to research, monitor, control and prevent air pollution. Concerted efforts by ASEM partners are required to tackle this common challenge. In this connection, participants underscored the need to enhance

research to understand atmospheric processes of air pollution, capacity building in monitoring and research, as well as the importance of adoption and enforcement of effective prevention and control policies and measures, as well as cooperation at international, inter- and intra-regional levels.

5. Participants acknowledged the value of ASEM as a cooperation platform in this area. Against the backdrop of rapid industrialization and urbanization process, many Asian countries are faced with the task of achieving sustainable development while curbing the impact of pollution on their environment and society. European partners went through the same stages and made notable progress in improving air quality based on rich scientific expertise and technology. There is great potential for Asian and European countries to share experiences and best practices of air pollution prevention and control, to increase cooperation in research in atmospheric processes, and to enhance policy dialogue and technology cooperation in this field.

6. In the presentations and discussions, participants proposed a number of recommendation and possible solutions and measures for ASEM partners to achieve the common goal of preventing and controlling air pollution, including:

1) Governments adopting both short-term and long-term targeted strategies of sustainable development with renewable energy production and timely and strict environment protection policies as priorities, and setting up monitoring, early warning as well as accountability systems for the implementation of the policies.

2) Enhancing collaboration and coordination among different government agencies especially the economic planning and environment protection bodies.

3) Unifying national and local monitoring standards and ensuring coordination among nationwide basic monitoring networks.

4) Improving quality control of monitoring work by increasing credibility and comparability of various stations and scales (from urban area to rural area and including regional, national and local levels.)

5) Emphasizing comprehensive and in-depth research as the basis for technology innovation and policy implementation.

6) Encouraging research cooperation to better understand air pollution and encouraging multidisciplinary cooperation in atmospheric science.

7) Increasing investment in research and technology innovation and integrating technology innovation into the process of industrialization and urbanization.

8) Improving environment education, with a view to promoting public awareness of air pollution and the importance of joint efforts by government, industry, civil society and private sector in tackling this problem.

9) Encouraging the involvement of civil society in policy planning and strengthening enforcement of policies in legislative and regulatory levels.

10) Industries increasing investment in the improvement of research and technology, promoting green production and implementing energy-efficient and environmentally friendly projects.

11) General public embracing a more responsible and eco-friendly lifestyle that helps reducing air pollution, including by using more public commuters and reducing household energy consumption.

12) Taking advantage of the complementarity between Asian and European countries, enhancing inter-and trans-regional policy dialogue on air pollution, sharing best practices, promoting joint high level atmospheric research, as well as technology cooperation and exploring market potentials related to improvement of air quality.

7. Participants also expressed their hope that follow-up activities be organized under the framework of ASEM.

8. The outcome of this Seminar is to be reported to the Fifth ASEM Environment Ministers' Meeting.