

Statement by
Ms Heidi Hautala,
Vice-President of the European Parliament
at the 12th ASEM Summit
18 October 2018

Your Excellencies,

The European Parliament had the privilege to host on 27 and 28 September 2018 the Asia Europe Parliamentary Partnership Meeting.

About 150 members from 38 parliaments participated. Several parliament Speakers and Deputy Speakers, representing over 60% of the world population and GDP, attended this important institutional event, which we hardly can define a “side event” of the ASEM process.

As much as we missed the direct contribution to our work of representatives from the executive, I am pleased now to report to you about our work. I also want to convey the greetings of the President of the European Parliament, Mr Antonio Tajani, and of the Speaker of the Parliament of Bangladesh, Ms Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury, who co-chaired ASEP 10 with the President of the Australian Senate, Mr Scott Ryan, and with myself.

As “global partners for global challenges”, we legislators decided to explore the impact of climate change on the economy, migration and security. Climate change is one of the most urgent global challenges humanity faces today. Our 54 points Joint Declaration reflects our concerns.

ASEP 10 called upon all countries for the highest political commitment to the effective implementation of the Paris Agreement in all its aspects, including mitigation, adaptation, finance, technology development and transfer, and recalled that limiting the rise in global temperature to well below 2°C does not guarantee that significant adverse climate impacts will be avoided.

ASEP partners were unanimous and very vocal in urging for quick and effective action. Climate action is more urgent than ever. We are all being affected already.

Scientific evidence is overwhelming. Unfortunately an important global player has decided to withdraw from the Paris Agreement and other international instruments. Therefore, it is all the more important that Asia and Europe stand firm in our support for climate action with the necessary financial means.

However, climate action does not need to be a burden. The green economy and the circular economy have a huge potential for job creation and sustainable growth.

In these times of change and uncertainties, ASEP 10 promoted multilateralism and cooperation for a rules-based global order, including trade, control of nuclear proliferation and active promotion of human rights and assistance of people in danger - such as the Rohingya with their unacceptable fate.

On all those issues the increase of ASEM cooperation is very welcome, but please do not forget that when it comes to implementing actions, you will most probably need parliaments to pass the necessary legislation.

Therefore, ASEP 10 calls on ASEM to explore ways in which legislators can contribute to the ASEM process for more than three minutes every two years.

I look forward the result of ASEM summit, and on behalf of ASEP 10, I wish you a very fruitful meeting.

Heidi Hautala

Vice President of the European Parliament and co-chair of ASEP 10