

ASIA - EUROPE COOPERATION: OVERCOMING DIFFICULTIES, TOWARDS A NEW STAGE OF DEVELOPMENT

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Since its establishment in 1996, the Asia - Europe Meeting (ASEM) has been continuously evolving into one of the world's largest inter-regional cooperation mechanisms with 53 members, and the only mechanism connecting Asia and Europe.

Over the past 26 years, ASEM has affirmed its role in maintaining peace, security, stability, prosperity and development in Asia and Europe. Across three pillars of political, economic, and social/cultural cooperation, ASEM is a bridge connecting cultures as well as promoting people-to-people exchanges between the two continents.

Recently, the outbreak of the disease along with the complicated developments of the world and regional situation have partly affected multilateral cooperation, including the ASEM Forum. But history has proven, the more difficult the situation, the more consensus, determination and multilateral action is required. This is also the time when the role and value of cooperation mechanisms such as ASEM should be promoted.

The ASEM Forum is an effective and appropriate framework to promote exchange and dialogue among members, thereby contributing to building and strengthening trust and jointly finding the best and most effective solutions to handle emerging global and regional issues. In particular, the goodwill and efforts of its members are the key to ASEM cooperation to soon overcome difficulties, and to affirm and promote its values.

In that context, with more than a quarter of a century of cooperation, the Forum's position, and above all, the enormous potential and need for cooperation among its members, we will continue to set high expectations for the future of ASEM cooperation.

The intrinsic strength as well as complementarity of ASEM member countries is an important premise for the Forum to take the lead in capturing and taking advantage of the current large cooperation flows in science - technology, digital transformation, sustainable and inclusive development, and responding to climate change.

To capitalize on the potentials of ASEM, it is important to develop a strategic ASEM Vision towards comprehensive, effective, and people-centered cooperation towards stability, innovation and development, and contribute to a more efficient global governance mechanism, in the spirit of dialogue, policies and actions coordination.

As a founding member, Vietnam has consistently participated in and contributed to important milestones in the development of ASEM. We have successfully taken on many responsibilities and proposed new initiatives in promoting multilateralism within ASEM cooperation.

For Vietnam, 2022 is an important year in implementing the country's goals and strategic orientations for post-COVID-19 socio-economic recovery and development. As such, Vietnam will continue to place high priority on cooperating with ASEM and promoting Asia-Europe partnership, contributing to peace, stability, and prosperity between the two continents and all over the world.