

10 December 2021

To: The Ministers of Asia and Europe at the ASEM Education Ministers meeting

AUN, EUA, and IAU call for continuation and enhancement of the ASEM Education Process

On the occasion of the 8th Meeting of Asia-Europe (ASEM) Ministers of Education, the ASEAN University Network (AUN), the European University Association (EUA) and the International Association of Universities (IAU), would like to reiterate their commitment towards the ASEM Education Process, and call for its continuation and enhancement. Representing the higher education institutions of both regions, with a global perspective, the Associations have been contributing actively to this important intergovernmental process since its inception.

Since 2008, the ASEM Education Process has been growing in terms of participating parties, themes and resulting initiatives. It has established its reputation and integrity as a cross-regional platform for exchange and collaboration, in particular in the field of higher education. It opens important opportunities for the development of higher education systems in Asia and Europe, with regard to internationalisation and their general capacity to respond to global and regional challenges, as well as changing societal needs. Themes and goals explored under the ASEM Education Process also include analogies with other regional processes, such as the Bologna Process, which may deserve a more systematic and synergetic discussion in the future. The approaching deadline of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals provide a new momentum, with regional and interregional exchanges as an important additional strategic means to be explored.

The ASEM Education Process is a long-term investment with the potential to generate significant benefits for the education and research sectors, as well as for societies and economies. The ongoing Covid-19 crisis underlined the rational of its work and also tested its resilience, resulting in the [8th Ministerial Meeting, hosted by Thailand](#) on 15 December. This is accompanied by the preceding Senior Officials meeting, with a new strategy and action plan, both developed in close consultation and collaboration with stakeholder organisations.

AUN, EUA and IAU would like to congratulate all contributing parties on these achievements. The Associations would like to thank the ASEM Education Process Secretariates of Germany, Indonesia and Belgium for their work and collaboration, and confirm a strong commitment to the next Secretariat.

Furthermore, AUN, EUA and IAU appeal to the ASEM governments to commit to hosting the next Secretariat, as its presence will ensure the implementation of the new strategy and action plan. More generally, it will sustain and continue the various initiatives that the process has initiated so far.