MINORITY CONFLICTS – TOWARDS AN ASEM FRAMEWORK FOR CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

6TH ASIA-EUROPE ROUNDTABLE

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

AN TÁNAISTE MARY COUGHLAN, TD
Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment, Ireland

The theme of the 6th Asia-Europe Roundtable is one close to our hearts in Ireland. This is particularly true here in Donegal where history and the complicated politics of our island transformed our county border into a demarcation of jurisdiction.

Indeed, the cross border cooperation involved in this event, and the close collaboration between the University of Ulster, the Letterkenny Institute of Technology and the Europe-Asia Policy Forum, underscores the progress we have made in recent years.

That progress has not come easy. And we should take a moment to reflect on the many victims of violence over the course of thirty years of conflict. It is a story of loss, dutifully and sensitively recorded in the remarkable publication *Lost Lives*. But it is also a story of the resilience and determination of those living with the scars – physical and emotional - of violence. We were reminded of this earlier this week, when we heard the verdict in the civil action taken by the relatives of the victims of the horrific Omagh bombing of eleven years ago. Testaments to the victims of conflict, in whatever form they take, are not just a comfort to relatives but a continuing injunction to all to persist in the search for peace.

Our search for peace was a long and complex journey. The conundrum of partition and of the conflict in Northern Ireland was that history created a minority of unionists on the island of Ireland and a minority of nationalists within Northern Ireland.

Solving this conundrum was at the heart of our search for a durable settlement. It took many years and the concerted cooperation of the Irish and British Governments. It required the courage of peacemakers within Northern Ireland, including political and community leaders, members of the clergy and civil society organisations. It required listening to voices that are often ignored: of women, of victims and of others that typically remain outside peace negotiations. Our international friends came to our assistance, notably but not exclusively in the United States.

All of these efforts could only have succeeded within a clear conceptual framework. This was eventually most clearly articulated in the Good Friday Agreement in 1998, but this was the culmination of a long and sustained approach to conflict resolution.

The consistency of our approach is reflected in the many key documents that were crafted at critical junctures in the peace process, including the British and Irish summits in the early 1980s; the Anglo-Irish Agreement of 1985; the Joint Declaration in 1993; the new Framework for Agreement in 1995 and the Ground Rules for Substantive All-Party Negotiations in 1996.

This new beginning could only be achieved through the principle of consent, the bedrock of any durable solution. So fundamental was this concept that its formulation was enshrined in an amendment to our Constitution.

Violence or the threat of violence could play no part in the course or outcome of the negotiations. This was set out in the six Mitchell Principles, which included a commitment to complete disarmament and sanctions for those found in breach of these Principles.

This commitment to non-violence was a threshold to admittance to negotiations. The concept of inclusivity did not mean inclusion without this essential consideration.

Most fundamentally, our approach was based on rights, namely that consistent with justice and equity, the outcome must respect the democratic dignity, civil rights and religious liberties of both communities within Northern Ireland. These rights include the right to free speech; the right to freedom of expression of religion; the right to pursue democratically national and political aspirations; the right to seek constitutional change by peaceful and legitimate means; the right to live wherever one chooses without hindrance; and the right to equal opportunity in all social and economic activity, regardless of class, creed, sex or colour.

One of the most complex areas to formulate was that of democratic rights between the minority and majority. As set out in the Good Friday Agreement, this was achieved through a series of formulas governing the selection of Ministerial portfolios through the d'Hondt system, the oath of office and code of conduct, and safeguards to ensure mutual consent on key issues requiring cross-community support.

Of course the assertion of rights, their inclusion as an inherent part of the text of the Good Friday Agreement and their translation into hard reality through effective implementation was a long process requiring commitment and determination. Oversight and external assurance was key to building confidence in that process of implementation.

I could not come here of course without mentioning the greatest minority on Earth, not in our numbers but in terms of our treatment: Women. Women played a key part in the peace process and, through the Women's Coalition, played an invaluable role in the 1998 negotiations. That role was not just acting as channels of communications between the participants who were also antagonists, but in insisting that the Agreement had to be comprehensive in dealing with all of the underlying issues.

The role of women in peacemaking and peacebuilding is a key one. Only some 2.7% of women have been signatories to peace agreements across 14 peace processes globally, according to UNIFEM. If we wish to build durable peace, we must do more to increase women's leadership and participation. I am delighted that under the Government's Conflict Resolution Initiative, Ireland is taking a leading role in promoting UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on 'Women, Peace and Security'.

We can take great pride in our collective achievements on this island and within these islands but we should be careful not to forget what we have learned. Lesson recording, lesson learning and lesson sharing will add to our knowledge of how best to make peace and to make peace agreements stick.

Indeed, this event and its structure signals that we are clearly free now to reflect on the Northern Ireland conflict and the peace process itself. I firmly believe in the value of this reflection. It may offer lessons to other areas afflicted by conflict, as other areas of conflict can inform and assist our own peacebuilding efforts.

Finally, let me conclude by invoking the mantra that must guide all peacemakers. No matter the complexities, the obstacles or the seeming conundrums, we must be guided and sustained by our duty of hope. That is the duty of every citizen of the world when faced with violence and conflict. I am delighted to have had the opportunity of meeting so many who have answered that call to duty.

I wish you every success in this initiative and have every confidence that you will take with you valuable lessons and insights.

MR. MARTIN MCGUINNESS
Deputy First Minister for Northern Ireland

I was extremely pleased to be asked to make a contribution to the Asia-Europe Roundtable in Letterkenny in June. I hope that the deliberations and insight into the workings of our own peace process will assist participants in developing strategies to assist others in the search for resolution of seemingly intractable conflicts.

As has been acknowledged by many eminent people on numerous occasions, each conflict is unique in its origins and underlying causes and therefore no one solution will fit every set of circumstances.

But by sharing our experiences I believe it is possible to identify some common causes for conflict in different regions and through an all inclusive negotiation process lessons can be learned from conflicts such as the one that we are emerging from.

I hope that my participation and contribution to your conference will assist in creating some basic principles that can be applied in the search for resolution of other longstanding conflicts when opportunities present themselves.

PROF. JOHN HUME

Nobel Laureate and Tip O'Neill Chair in Peace Studies
University of Ulster

Given that our generation is living through one of the biggest revolutions in the history of the world – the technological, telecommunications and transport revolution, the world of today is a much smaller place. We should underline to ourselves that since we're in a much smaller place, we're in a stronger position to shape that world. And therefore, there should be an intention, particularly by the large countries of the world like the US and the EU, to create a world in which there is no longer any war or any conflict. And the way of doing that, is by sending principles of conflict resolution to areas of conflict. And of course we have here (Northern Ireland) some experience of conflict resolution.

I often tell the story of when I was first elected to the European Parliament. I was in Strasbourg, France, and I went for a walk. I stopped in the middle of the bridge from Strasbourg in France, to Kehl in Germany. If I stood on this bridge 30 years ago, at the end of the 2nd War World, the worst half–century in the history of the world - two world wars and millions of people slaughtered, and if I said then "Don't worry, in 30 years' time, we'll all be a united Europe", they would have sent me to a psychiatrist. But I thought: "Good Lord, it has happened, and it's not talked about!" The European Union is the best example in the history of the world of conflict resolution. And that's when I thought the principles of it should be sent to areas of conflict, and I got heavily involved in bringing those principles to resolving the conflict in Northern Ireland.

There are three principles of conflict resolution. The first principle is respect for difference. What's conflict about, no matter where it is? It is about difference, be it difference of race, religion or nationality. The second principle is institutions that respect those differences. You look at the EU, you have a Council of Ministers where all countries are represented. Similarly for the European Commission, civil service and European Parliament, all countries are there. The third principle is what I call the healing process. They are working together in their common interest for a change, that common interest being the social and economic development of Europe. And in so doing, they're breaking down the barriers of centuries, and the new Europe has evolved, and its still evolving, and you look now at a totally peaceful Europe.

As we look at the Good Friday Agreement of Northern Ireland, you'll find the same three principles. The first principle, respect for difference - the identities of both communities in Northern Ireland is in the agreement, and are fully respected. On the second principle of institutionalized respect of difference, the Northern Ireland assembly is elected by proportional voting that ensures that all sections of the community are fully represented. The assembly then proportionally elects the government of Northern Ireland, so all sections of the people are represented at the governmental level as well. And the third principle – the healing process: they're now working together in the social and economic development of Northern Ireland. As that keeps going on for a generation or two, the old barriers of the past will be totally eroded, and a new Ireland will evolve based on agreement and respect for difference. Given that we're living in a smaller world, those principles should be sent to any area of conflict in the world, in order that we create a world in which there is no longer any war or any conflict.

HIS EXCELLENCY MR. CHO TAEYONG
Ambassador of the Republic of Korea to Ireland

It is my great pleasure and honour to speak to such a distinguished audience this afternoon. I am particularly honoured to share a podium with Dr. John Hume, Nobel Peace Prize laureate. It was his vision, courage and a profound statesmanship that helped make the truly historic Good Friday Agreement of 1998 possible.

Today I would like to share with you my personal thoughts on the Northern Ireland peace process, the living realities of division of the Korean Peninsula, and the current topic of North Korean nuclear challenge.

Northern Ireland peace process: a personal observation

As a diplomat from Korea, a country that has been divided for over 60 years, Northern Ireland's peace process was of course a subject of immense interest. But, what we need to do is not so much to superimpose one situation over the other, since the two situations are more different than similar, as to try and juxtapose the two situations so that we still can learn important core lessons.

I want to begin by telling a story. It was the summer of 1982 in London. I was a very green diplomat at the time, on a one-year study in Britain. One day, not long after I had arrived in London, I came across a magazine article about Northern Ireland. And in that article, the author said, "In Belfast, an essential part of growing up is to acquire the capability to tell from a distance whether the person walking towards you is Catholic or Protestant."

Well, I want to tell you another story and it is about Korea. In the freezing month of January of 1951, a man in his mid-twenties was walking down south, fleeing from advancing North Korean and Chinese forces and leaving behind his father and mother, brother and sister, thinking he could return after a month at most. Not only was he unable to ever return to his hometown in North Korea, he never met or even came to know the whereabouts of his beloved family he had left behind six decades ago. That unfortunate person is my father and he died last year.

Be it anywhere, division is much more than an abstract concept as it creates such tremendous human sufferings. Since I came to Dublin one and a half years ago, I have learned more about the Troubles, the Omagh bombing and other tragedies. But I have also learned more about the peace process and about the fact that so many people have worked hard, sacrificed and devoted their lives for the building of peace. Thanks to these noble efforts, Northern Ireland which once was put aside as an unsolvable conflict – so much so that the position of Northern Ireland Secretary was once called a political graveyard for British politicians - is transformed today into a case of hope and admiration for the rest of the world.

Now, I understand the peace process is ongoing, not complete as yet, with a number of challenges still to be met. But Northern Ireland has become a case of management of peace and management of integration, while Korea is still struggling with management of division.

There are many reasons behind the success of the Northern Ireland peace process. Some of them can be readily applied elsewhere and others are perhaps unique to Ireland. Foremost and fundamental among them are aspirations for peace shared by the majority of people not only in both communities in Northern Ireland but also in the Republic of Ireland and Britain. In addition to that, I would point out the practice of democracy with attendant shared beliefs in rule of law, majority rule, maturity and relative civility of actors in peace negotiations as elements of success. I was particularly impressed by the fact that all participants in the peace process accepted the principle that majority views of those living in Northern Ireland will determine its future. I was very impressed also by the Irish people's and government's willingness to change the territorial clause of the constitution in line with this principle. The principle of majority rule and acceptance of dialogue rather than arms as a means of settling difference may be taken for granted here, but I can tell you that this is hardly the case in many parts of the world today.

Having said that, there remains much work to be done in making peace really stick. From what I have read and been told about Northern Ireland, it appears that despite notable improvements in the recent years, segregation of the two communities still persists in many aspects of people's lives in Northern Ireland. I believe that bringing the two communities closer is as important as legal and institutional arrangements. Integration takes time, but it is important that civic leaders of the two communities as well as governments keep working with commitment and perseverance.

Korea: management of division and beyond

Issues of segregation and integration will be important challenges in Korea when a day comes where people from South and North Korea become neighbours living side by side. Korean people, south and north, continue to believe they are one nation despite six decades of complete separation. Korean people, south and north, look the same, use the same language and share the same cultural heritage. And, until it was divided after the Second World War, the Korean Peninsula had been a single political entity since 668 AD.

In spite of all that, however, it is also important to recognize that for quite a while people in the south and people in the north will not have an easy time trying to be reintegrated into one community. For starters, people in North Korea have lived their entire lives in a system that is so extreme and, as many Western travellers put it, surreal. The recent settlement of over 15,000 North Koreans in the south has demonstrated the kind of challenges we will face when Korea is reunited. If the experience people in the south have had meeting with people from the north can be unique and strange, the experience people from the north are having can be best described as clueless, frightening, and traumatic. And these North Koreans usually have spent months and years in China, Mongolia and Southeast Asia before they finally found their way to South Korea. In other words, these North Koreans have been somewhat exposed to the outside ways of life unlike the tens of millions of North Koreans who have never travelled outside.

Now let me share with you some of the facts and figures so as to give the broad picture of North Korea. The Korean Peninsula is 220,000 km² almost three times the size of the island of Ireland. North Korea is slightly bigger than the south. Smaller in size, South Korea's population is 50 million, while the north's population is 20 million. South Korea is the world's 13th largest economy, 10th largest trader, the biggest shipbuilder, 2nd biggest producer in semiconductors and 5th largest automaker. With tens of millions of internet users, South Korea is also probably the most wired nation in the world. South Korea is a functioning and often lively democracy as people elect presidents for a single 5-year term and the National Assembly every 4 years.

North Korea strikes a very different picture. 61 years in existence, North Korea has had only two rulers, father and son. Many observers believe that North Korea is preparing an unprecedented – at least not unless it is a monarchy-transfer of power to the third generation of Kim family. North Korea is one of the world's poorest nations with per capita annual income slightly over US$1,000 and usually has a food shortage of 1.5 million metric tons. Its total trade is US$3 billion and China accounts for 75% of this total.

But things were not always that bad for North Korea. In fact, following the end of the Korean War in 1953, North Korea recovered much faster than the South for two decades. It was not until 1973 that the per capita income of the South began to surpass that of the North. The North's economic decline was very dramatic and it seems that the North Korean system worked to some extent in coercively mobilizing resources but did not function at all when the task became more complicated and the economy became more knowledge-based.

For what North Korea could not achieve with its economy, it has been intent to make up in armaments especially weapons of mass destruction (WMD), as the conventional military balance began to tilt in South Korea's favor. North Korea's official slogan is to build a militarily mighty nation (强盛大國) by 2012. 2012 is a very special year as it falls on the centennial of the North's first leader Kim Il Sung's birth.

Meanwhile, as indoctrination of the populace is the central element of the regime's durability, North Korea pursued in earnest complete isolation and separation between south and north. The two parties have been conducting on-again

off-again dialogue since 1970. In that dialogue, the reunion of separated families, opening of communications and travel between south and north have always been South Korea's priorities, but because of North Korea's reluctance and opposition, not much has been achieved except for hundreds of separated families meeting at the border town for three days or so.

More recently, we succeeded in persuading North Korea to build a joint industrial complex not far from the border. In this industrial complex, over 100 South Korean firms are operating factories and approximately 40,000 North Korean workers come to work every day. This is by far the largest and most significant inter-Korean project. It is most significant not just because of the scale of contact and exposure but because this is the first inter-Korean project whereby we try and teach them how to catch a fish rather than just giving them fish. It is therefore most unfortunate that this project is now in jeopardy following North Korea's arrest of a South Korea woman manager. It is extremely difficult for my government since the North has not allowed any consular access to the detained South Korea citizen. For the past ten years, a sizable tourist project which allowed two million South Koreans to visit a picturesque mountain in North Korea, although without meeting North Korean people, has been closed since last year when a middle-aged woman tourist was shot dead by a North Korea soldier apparently for venturing out of the designated area. In a nutshell, whatever meagre progress that has been made in inter-Korean exchange is now being reversed. And, that is most undesirable.

Then, what must we do to overcome decades-old division on the Korean Peninsula? There seems to be two possible paths before us. One path is to generally follow the model of the Northern Ireland peace process and somehow reactivate the dialogue between South and North Korea by talking some sense to North Korean leadership, gradually increase the level of exchange and exposure, pursue mutual benefits and common prosperity, and thus prepare both South and North Korea for an eventual unification. This path or roadmap is good except that we are not certain whether actual events will follow such coherent and logical steps.

The second path we can envisage is very different. This path involves sudden instability, followed by a messy process including often uncoordinated responses by concerned parties and an agonizing search for a solution, but hopefully results in a happy outcome which reflects the wishes of the vast majority of the Korean people, south and north. Such an outcome must also be consistent with the fundamental interests of the neighbouring countries. As you can see, this second path does not have the aesthetic qualities of the first roadmap but perhaps has some practical merits. Please forgive me for not being too specific about the second path. Regardless of the odds, my government will still pursue the first path as much as possible. So, under the circumstances, I better not name names.

North Korean Nuclear Challenge

Now let me talk about the recent nuclear test of North Korea. North Korea's nuclear test of 25 May naturally made headline news all over the world. But, more importantly, this test is being taken much more seriously than the first test in 2006 - for several important reasons. First, while technical analysis is still under way, this test looks more powerful than the one in 2006. As one develops operational nuclear weapons, a series of tests are usually required to hone the technology and the design. In this context, even failed tests are not necessarily a setback. In fact, the May test seemed like an improvement from 2006 and North Korea now probably possesses more reliable nuclear explosive devices. North Korea's ability to miniaturize the nuclear device into a warhead is still a question, though.

Second, North Korea's stated intention this time around is more unambiguous and provocative. For multiple reasons, probably including the possible succession of power to the next generation of the Kim family, North Korea seems to have decided to go all the way. North Korea stated that it would not take part in the Six Party Talks, a multilateral negotiating forum that had been set up in 2003. Instead, North Korea stepped up internal propaganda about becoming "a nuclear weapons state." Furthermore, this test was conducted in spite of apparent overtures from Washington. While other countries are watching how the new Obama administration's policies are firming up, North Korea chose to do the ultimate opposite of "unclenching the fist." We can never be sure about the adversary's ulterior motivations and one can even argue that motivations can also change over time and depending on circumstances. However, given North Korea's actions as well as its rhetoric, prudence requires us to assume the worst.

The UN Security Council will adopt a strong resolution shortly. UN sanctions and bilateral punitive measures contemplated by some parties will affect North Korea's economy. To what extent North Korea will suffer depends on the robustness of the measures and the active cooperation of China and Pyongyang's other trading partners. Since North Korea's recent provocations are far more serious, unwarranted and are detrimental to the fundamental security interests of all parties concerned, we can be more hopeful than before that the sanctions will bite this time. But, adoption of Security Council resolutions is just the beginning and perhaps the simpler part of our combined actions.

Since North Korea's current challenge is more strategic in nature, our response must also be based on careful strategic thinking. First, we must be prepared for a long-haul standoff. All indications tell us that North Korea is probably prepared to go quite a distance in defying the will of the international community. North Korea may resort to additional provocations and brinkmanship, daring the international community to blink. It is essential that the international community is equally determined to keep up the pressure. This is of course easier said than done, but it is vital we stay the course. Whatever additional tactics we employ, this will be the basis for success. When the Six Party Talks was launched, some argued that it would be an effective format not only for negotiations but also for exerting collective pressure if North Korea reneged on its promises. Now is the time to prove it.

Second, we must be open to dialogue with North Korea. However, as North Korea's second nuclear test altered much of the premises of the Six Party Talks, we must lay down robust markers and must not deviate from them. Most important is our unwavering insistence that North Korea not be recognized as a nuclear weapons state. Our goal must be nothing less than verifiable denuclearization. In 2005, North Korea gave a written commitment to abandon all nuclear weapons and all existing nuclear programs. We must hold Pyongyang to its commitment. New negotiations must have a timetable so that they do not drift. New negotiations will have to be more comprehensive than before. All our concerns about North Korea and all of North Korea's own concerns must be put on the table and serious negotiations in a relatively fast timeframe must take place. This time we must pursue fast-lane, big-for-big negotiations. The fundamental question is whether North Korea is prepared to give up its nuclear ambitions and go back to its previous commitment of denuclearization. North Korea's unequivocal answer to this fundamental question must be demanded at the initial phase.

These are indeed tall orders but, as Henry Kissinger said recently, if the international community "cannot deal with a country of the size of North Korea --- a country that has no natural resources, no significant trade, totally dependent on its neighbors for supplies, then what is the sense of talking of an international system?"

The final point I would like to make relates to a somewhat broader perspective. The second nuclear test is far from risk-free for North Korea. It angered China as chair of the Six Party Talks and China joined in the UN Security Council's condemnation of North Korea. More importantly, North Korea's second test and its stated quest for nuclear weapons created a strategic dilemma for China. China has always pursued dual objectives: one is to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons in East Asia and the other, maintaining a buffer on its northeastern border. As long as North Korea's nuclear intentions remained ambiguous, China could get away with pursuing dual objectives. But, North Korea's test pushed China out of its strategic comfort zone. China's policy reversal will present existential challenges to North Korea. Having lost Washington, Tokyo and Seoul, North Korea has become very dependent on China. On top of providing political support, China provides most of the oil North Korea consumes and, as previously mentioned, accounts for 75% of North Korea's trade. As long as North Korea insists on becoming a nuclear power, China will have to conclude that continuing to prop up Pyongyang is not consistent with one of its strategic interests, that is, nuclear non-proliferation in East Asia. By continuing to insist on becoming a nuclear power, North Korea is turning the nuclear tug of war into an existential struggle. Possibly, ten years from now, one may point to the North Korea's second nuclear test as a defining moment in Korea's modern history.

The subject of this Roundtable is of great relevance to the post-Cold War world. And, I am confident that stimulating and thought-provoking discussions will take place from tomorrow and many useful outcomes will be produced. I hope that while the case of Korea does not fit into classic minority conflicts, many useful thoughts and food for thought that have relevance to Korea will be derived from the Roundtable.

MR. DON PATHAN
Journalist
The Nation

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Building on the findings from the previous gatherings, the recently concluded 6th Asia-Europe Round Table (AER) examined different types of minority conflicts with a particular focus on "frozen conflicts" in which cessation of open hostility offers a chance for the regional and international community to explore possible solutions and frameworks for transforming the conflict into sustainable peace. While the 5th AER explored the various potential pitfalls of managing a peace process, the 6th AER facilitated discussion of relevant case studies to illustrate how conflicts developed and provided different perspectives on various possible solutions or framework for managing conflict. While keeping in mind that each conflict is unique in its character because of different underlying causes, contours and trajectories, participants at the 6th AER succeeded in teasing out some common threads on why these conflicts evolved along certain patterns and how they might be addressed. More than 40 Asian and European experts in conflict and peace studies and research, academics, specialised journalists, human rights activists, practitioners, and diplomats came together in Derry and Letterkenny in both jurisdictions in Ireland from June 10-12, 2009 to work towards a framework for conflict management. The following is a summary of some of the recommendations that the experts came up with.

Key Messages and Recommendations

1   ***Within the ASEM Framework - Establish a Track II forum to detect early warning signals and monitor conflict areas:***
     Members in the ASEM framework should set up a Track II forum to detect early warning signals and monitor conflict areas. Track II participants should be encouraged to provide expert advice to policy makers at the Track I level. In order to achieve that, skillful and respected mediators and eminent persons/statesmen who can take part in the mediation and formal negotiations between conflicting parties need to be identified.

     Peace and mediation process have to be supported by an institutional framework to ensure continuity and the vision for this process has to go beyond the formal peace agreement. Linking up with local partners, namely NGOs working in conflict areas, is crucial.

2   ***Establish a Legal and Consultative Framework for the Protection of Minority Rights in EU and ASEAN Countries:***
     The task of establishing a legal and consultative framework for the protection of minority rights in the European Union and the ten countries in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations may be an enormous challenge for any single organisation. However, there are activities that could be taken to lead up to such an endeavour. First, it was generally agreed that outcomes from the AER meetings should be conveyed to the EU and the ASEAN Secretariat. This could be followed up by fora and dialogue processes that bring the EU and the OSCE High Commissioner for National Minorities together with minority groups from ASEAN countries.

     Within the ASEAN framework, minority representation should be encouraged, especially in the regional grouping's inter-cultural exchange programmes. The ASEAN Secretariat should be the institution responsible for the mobilisation of these activities. It was also generally recognised that the Secretariat's capacity to handle minority issues, especially in conflict areas, has to be strengthened. Moreover, the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) should be encouraged to set up a working group on conflict prevention and management on an ad-hoc basis.

3   ***Importance of a good Early Warning System:***
     In order to prevent a minority conflict from developing into widespread violence and bloodshed, and in keeping with the spirit of the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, it is essential that a sound early warning system be developed at the national and cross-border level. It was generally agreed among the participants that there is a need for a thorough meta-analysis of the existing warning systems to see if they are adequate to also caution against minority conflicts.

A good early warning system would have task forces at national and regional levels that are set up to monitor activities of minorities and trends of certain types of events that would qualify as undesirable signs/signals that certain conflicts are in danger of developing into full blown conflicts. Some of these signals include persistent human rights violations, discrimination of minority groups or individuals, high military expenditure, unprecedented level of cross border migration by minority groups, speeches intended to incite hatred, opinion polls and other incidents and events that may shatter the social fabric of the local society.

An early warning system should also include an information strategy aimed at raising public awareness and influencing policy makers, as well as political action groups to take measures to address the evolving problems. Individuals or organisations monitoring these crucial developments should partner with law enforcement, legal offices, human rights groups, NGOs and universities as a way of strengthening their capacity to mobilise efforts needed to prevent the outbreak of a conflict.

4   ***Enhance Minority Actors and Stake Holders' Sense of Ownership in the Mediation Process:***
Crucial to any peace process is the role of the minorities in the mediation process. While it was generally agreed that more research on this topic was needed, participants at the 6th AER underscored the importance of having a framework that would ensure the participation of minorities so that their grievances could be heard. Specifically, minorities must be educated about the peace and mediation process and be prepared to take part in it.

It was also agreed that a network of resource persons and experts on mediation and conflict be set up for consultation purposes and for possible involvement in training local activists and civic groups so that the latter groups would have a constructive role in the entire process. It is important for local actors to be the owners of the peace process through activities such as cross-cultural dialogues and activities. That would allow the conflicting parties to take credit for achievements, as well as enhance a sense of ownership that may have been lost because of the conflict.

The role of the diaspora in conflict transformation could be constructive and helpful. However, more studies on this subject still need to be done.

5   ***Role of Media in Conflict Prevention:***
Reporting on minority conflicts could be extremely difficult for professional journalists and therefore it was agreed that content training on relevant (minority) issues, as well as the promotion of peace journalism, was needed to ensure that news reports capture the conflict fairly and accurately. Discussion on sensitive issues among journalists should be encouraged and facilitated, while a sound information strategy is needed to prepare the public for pending compromises and other sensitive issues.

Besides the traditional media, it was also agreed that independent media, such as community radio, local newspapers, internet news, citizen reporters, should be assisted through financial and technical support. To avoid repetition, media organisations and existing training programmes in the conflict area should be mapped. One way to help broaden the scope of local media is to promote networking between local and international press.

6   ***Capacity Building for International and Regional Organisations:***
As mentioned earlier, the role of the eminent persons and experts is essential. But like the stake holders, these experts who understand the conflict itself and the conflicting groups and possess negotiating skills may need support as well. For them to be able to provide their expert advice in a timely manner, there must exist an organisational structure to assist them in this endeavour. Besides strengthening the capacity of the regional and international organisations to facilitate peace process, a database of lessons learned on comparable cases could be useful for reference or other purposes.

7   *Use Group Psychology as a Framework in Conflict Management:*
    For any peace process to have meaning at the human level, it is essential that a healing process be established to support intangible discourse that may take place after, or even before, the signing of a peace agreement between conflicting parties.

Report on Proceedings

1.   Setting the Scene: An Informal Briefing on Northern Ireland

University of Ulster's Professor Paul Arthur gave an overview of the ongoing peace process in Ireland and the various features of the three-decade long conflict that had to be overcome before a ceasefire and a formal peace agreement could be reached between the two sides. Professor Arthur stressed the need to understand the "ethnic baggage" of this conflict, as well as the political culture of the stake holders, and how these features could hinder the peace process. Professor Arthur also talked about the role of outside mediators, especially the United States and the European Union, as well as their contributions that led to the end of the violence; the rise and the decline of the Irish Republican Army; the peace settlement and finally the ongoing negotiation for a permanent and sustainable peace. After years of secret meetings between the British Government and the Irish Republican Army, the "most successful" guerilla outfit in the modern era, the two sides came to the conclusion that the "all-or-nothing attitude" had to make way for a meaningful, pragmatic political process.

The reason for the delay of local residents in the conflict areas in coming to terms with the need to enter into dialogue with the enemy was deeply rooted in their mindset, for they saw themselves as victims and therefore felt that it should not be their responsibility to make the needed concessions, much less enter into a dialogue with the opposition. Such a mindset created what Professor Arthur called the "tranquility of communal deterrence" - a tenuous balance that may have put a lid on the outbursts of violence from time to time but in real terms did nothing to address the root causes of the conflict. It was not until the governments of United States and the Republic of Ireland undertook to be the "guarantors" to the parties of the conflict that the process took a turn towards a formal agreement between the warring parties. Professor Arthur reminded the audience of the difficulties in negotiating and maintaining the peace, a process that comes immediately after the signing of a peace agreement. One of the most challenging tasks was to eliminate the zero-sum game mentality that pitted one community against another – the Protestants against the Catholics – as both sides felt that whatever was given to the other was obtained at their expense.

Given its success in getting the two sides to give up violence in favour of the peace process, the conflict in Northern Ireland has illustrated that it was possible for a regional entity, such as the European Union, to play a constructive role in the peace process. The European Union's contributions came in the form of political and financial commitment to an area that has been devastated by decades of violence. Furthermore, it helped this highly contested area come to the realisation that there was an entire continent that it was very much a part of. In other words, the European Union shed light on the potential of a real partnership between Northern Ireland and the whole of the European Union, and the genuine possibilities in that partnership. The peace and political process in Northern Ireland may still be bumpy, argued Professor Arthur, but it is on the right track.

Nobel laureate Professor John Hume provided much needed encouragement to the 6th AER participants in their difficult task of developing an ASEM framework for conflict management. Professor Hume stressed the need to respect differences and the importance of building institutions that ensure the healing process moves forward accordingly. The essence of a healing process is to work together towards a common interest. The international community's commitment to the social and economic development of Northern Ireland has not only helped end the conflict but "paved the way for a new Northern Ireland." Professor Hume encouraged the participants at the 6th AER to make use of their findings and share the principles of conflict resolution with the rest of the international community, especially with stake holders in conflict areas, in order to realise "a world in which there is no longer any war or any conflict".

While every conflict is different and there is no one-size-fits-all solution, **South Korean Ambassador to Ireland, H. E Cho Taeyong,** said the peace and political process in Northern Ireland gave hope and encouragement to the world and pointed out a number of lessons that could be drawn for his country's reference. Ambassador Cho then gave the participants a personal account of the legacy of a partitioned Korea and its effect on his family members and the people of the Korean Peninsula. He pointed out that while the conflict in Northern Ireland was ethno-nationalist by nature, North and South Koreans are one people divided by a political border and added that re-integration would not be easy. While South Koreans live in a functional democracy, North Koreans live in a communist state. Information about life in North Korea is hard to come by as the country shuts its door to the outside world. This reclusive state is on a quest to be a military power and believes this goal could be achieved by possessing nuclear weapons.

Ambassador Cho said North Korea's behaviour over recent months had been extremely provocative and that their nuclear ambition is stronger than ever. He described this current trend as "unfortunate and undesirable" and encouraged the international community to keep up the pressure on Pyongyang to work towards a peaceful outcome. Ambassador Cho said working with North Korea has been extremely difficult because of the regime's unwillingness to reciprocate initiatives taken by the South. While welcoming the recent UN Security Council decision to condemn North Korea's testing of its missiles, Ambassador Cho warned the international community that similar brinksmanship behavior from North Korea is likely to continue. North Korea's activities are strategic in nature and therefore the international community must think strategically when dealing with the country. Ambassador Cho believes that it is not in the interest of China to see a nuclear North Korea as it would be inconsistent with China's strategic interest in nuclear non-proliferation in East Asia.

2. **Background paper and Case Studies from Asia and Europe**
    INCORE's **John Nagle and Mary Alice Clancy**[1] gave an overview of the various types of minority conflicts and provided a basis for discussion of the different frameworks of conflict management. The types of minority conflicts can be broadly categorised to include claims of national independence or for unification with kin state, demands for different forms of autonomy and self-rule within a state, and different minority groups within a state being embroiled in ethnic conflict. Broadly speaking, the two types of ethno-national groupings are *indigenous* – those groups that were native to a land prior to a period of colonial expansion and *sub-state* – groups who are resident in a particular nation-state but who have a separate ethno-national identity. Often they have a neighbouring kin state with which they shared an identity. Nagle and Clancy argued that detailing whether a particular grouping is either an indigenous or a sub-state minority has a tremendous bearing on the form a conflict takes.

On the issue as to why these ethno-national minorities become embroiled in conflict with other groups, Nagle and Clancy point to a common form of claim-making. Some minorities viewed themselves as ethnically different, territorially compact and possessing a unified political system and therefore, a nation-state of their own would best serve their socio-economic well-being. Examples of these forms of demands include Tibetans, Abkhazians and the Moros, an indigenous Muslim minority in the southern Philippines. While these groups do not have a kin state to unify with, nevertheless, many have powerful backers and support in the international arena.

Groups wishing to break away and be re-unified with their kin state tend to be territorially compact. An example of such a group is the Ossetians who are straddled over the border of the Russia Federation and Georgia. A similar situation exists in Northern Ireland where Nationalists sought to unify with the Republic of Ireland while the Unionists wanted to remain part of the United Kingdom.

The two academics also gave an overview of macro-political methods that had been used throughout history - some peaceful and some violent - to address minority issues. These include ethnic cleansing, genocide,

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1   For the full text of "Minority Conflicts: Towards an ASEM Framework for Conflict Management". by Mary Alice C. Clancy and John Nagle (INCORE, University of Ulster, 2009), please refer to www.asef.org, www.fes-asia.org , or www.siiaonline.org

partition, secession, assimilation and a mix of assimilation and integration measures. Special attention was given to "frozen conflicts", which is defined as "those in which violent ethno-political conflict over secession has led to the establishment of a de facto regime that is recognised by neither the international community nor the rump state from which the secession occurred".

In a scenario in which the demand is a form of autonomy within a state, as opposed to a complete secession, the minority group may also demand that their language, religion and culture be recognised in the public sphere as well as separate schooling funded by the central government, in addition to a governance structure different from that of the state. In exchange for autonomy, the nation-state is allowed to maintain sovereignty over the contested territory. But even if the state is granted such autonomy, there is still potential for conflict. Granting autonomy to one group could potentially encourage other minorities to use violent means in order to gain more political power. It could also create a sense of insecurity and abandonment in the section of the majority population living in the designated area. An example of this would be the Serb population in the Krajina region who refused to recognise Croatia after the country declared autonomy from Yugoslavia in 1991.

As disturbing as it may be, nation-states have employed some extremely controversial macro-political methods to eliminate minority differences. These methods include genocide, which the two authors defined as systematic murder or indirect destruction of an ascriptive group "through the deliberate termination of the conditions which permits (their) biological and social reproduction" (McGarry & O'Leary, 1993:7). In this respect, forced population transfer can be considered a form of genocide. But when the group is not able to socially and biologically reproduce within a given territory, their predicament falls under the rubric of ethnic cleansing. During the war in the Balkans, the Serbs tried to remove Bosnian Muslims and Kosovar Albanians from territories the Serbs wished to dominate. Similar acts of ethnic cleansing also took place in Croatia where the Serb minorities were ethnically cleansed from the Krajina district.

Partition, on the other hand, is defined as a process of bracketing off a particular territory into a number of recognised state units. Partition is often used in order to endow particular ethno-national or political groups who hold incompatible claims regarding how the desired territory and polity should be governed. Partition has often occurred in the aftermath of the disintegration of empires and colonies. Its legacy is rarely a happy solution for stake holders and often followed by tension between the ethnic and nationalistic groups left behind. Examples include the partition of Ireland in 1921, India/Pakistan in 1947, Palestine in 1947 and Korea in 1953.

Secession, on the other hand, is a process of leaving a nation-state by declaring independence. Examples include Slovenia, Ukraine, Kosovo and East Timor. Violence often takes place when the claimed territory contains a sizable minority population whose identity belongs to the nation-state the secessionist movement desires to leave, such as the Serb minority in a breakaway Croatia. Moreover, if the contested region is an economically prosperous region, this could make secession extremely difficult as it adds an economic dimension to the equation.

Assimilation, meanwhile, is a process in which the state integrates minorities and transforms them into undifferentiated members of the state. In many cases, this means "cleansing" minorities of their language, religion and culture. The idea is to subjugate their cultures to the wider national culture. Subtly different from assimilation is the liberal preference of "bifucationism" – an attempt to reconcile pluralism within an overall frame of political citizenship. The idea is to permit minorities to practice their traditional cultural forms as long as they are restricted to the private sphere.

While it is in no doubt that the various macro-political methods to *eliminate* minority differences may be normatively unappealing, the macro-political methods for *managing* minority differences, on the other hand, are more empirical in nature. The latter offers a mean for conflict management, which is defined as the accommodation of ethnic and/or national differences in order to preserve the state's multi-ethnic and/or multi-

national character. One method of managing ethnic differences is through the "securitisation" of minority relations, thus, severely limiting the minority group's capability to mobilise politically because the state sees the mobilisation as a threat to the nation as a whole.

Another means of managing minority conflict is through cantonisation and/or federalisation. Cantonisation involves the devolution of power to a state's constituent units on the basis of ethnic and/or national difference. Unlike federalism where power is divided between the central government and the constituent units, which therefore cannot be unilaterally altered, the central government can roll back power as it sees fit in cantonisation. In a federation, power is divided between the central government and its constituent units. Unilateral alteration is prevented by the Constitution. In spite of the appealing aspects of federalism, its track record has not been impressive. The authors point to Canada and India as examples of the failure of federalism to prevent secessionist crises. And although federalism can provide a viable means of conflict management, it often needs to be in the form of consociationalism, a form of power-sharing that consists of four main principles: a grand coalition government representing all of the major segments of a divided society, proportionality in representation, public employment and expenditure, community autonomy on issues deemed to be vital, and constitutional vetoes for minorities. Consociationalism/power-sharing can operate within federations, cantons or across an entire state. In contrast to assimilation or integration, consociationalism seeks to manage conflict through recognition and protection of salient minority identities.

The stated process of conflict management and resolution are challenging for any environment. But they are even more difficult in regions beset by "frozen conflicts", a state in which violent ethno-political conflict over secession has led to the establishment of a de facto regime that is neither recognised by the international community nor the state in which the conflict occurred. In theory the political *status quo* can be considered a form of conflict management. It is often insufficiently democratic in practice. The common theme in frozen conflict is that the rump state lacks the political will or inability to change the *status quo.* One way to get the state and the secessionist entities to change their behaviour is to grant them regional status, such as membership in the European Union, as long as they adopt the EU's body of law and its criteria on minority rights. But this tends to work only if accession to the EU is in the short- to medium-term. Moreover, there remains the problem that the EU is viewed with suspicion by the secessionist entities of the "frozen conflicts". The authors pointed to Abkhazia, Transnistria and South Ossetia as examples where nationalist elements have opted to side with Russia for fear that the EU would diminish their hard-won *de facto* independence. In this respect, the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) and Council of Europe (CoE) are viewed by these secessionist entities as Western interlopers.

Nagle and Clancy also gave an overview of the EU and ASEAN Cooperation in Aceh, a region in far north-west Sumatra that was the vanguard of the anti-colonial struggle against the Dutch and supported the construction of the Indonesian state in the aftermath of World War II. However, the strong centralised nature of the Indonesian state alienated Aceh's political and religious elite. Coupled with the region's impoverishment and underdevelopment, this led the region to seek secession from central rule. The discovery of oil and gas reserves off of Aceh's coast in 1977, coupled with the influx of Javanese economic migrants, further added to the native Acehnese's sense of grievance. This led to the emergence of the Gerakan Aceh Merdeka (GAM), or the Free Aceh Movement. GAM's separatism did not gain significant support from the general population until the 1990s. Support for separatism was directly due to the Indonesian's army brutal counter-insurgency measures that was motivated by political concerns as much as, if not more than, security considerations.

In 2005 GAM set aside its demands for independence and as a compromise between "special autonomy" and "independence", the movement suggested the alternative of "self government". This compromise position can be partially attributed to the internationalisation of the issue as GAM sought the help of the international community to formulate a political platform that both advocated democracy and recognised Indonesian sovereignty. ASEAN and the EU were brought into the picture and on 15 August 2005, a Memorandum of Understanding crafted by a team led by Marrti Ahtisaari, the former president of Finland, was signed. The MoU allows for extensive political autonomy within Aceh; decommissioning, demobilisation and rehabilitation of

GAM combatants; withdrawal of all "non-organic" Indonesian police and army units; a general amnesty for GAM prisoners; compensation for GAM and the Acehnese population; legislation allowing for the formation of local political parties; a 70:30 split between the Acehnese and central government on oil and gas profits; and the establishment of a truth and reconciliation commission. The Aceh Monitoring Mission (AMM) was established by the EU and ASEAN member states. On 15 December 2006, the AMM completed its mandate, four days after the province's first direct democratic elections.

Professor Stefan Wolff gave an overview of global conflict and highlighted the patterns of success and failure, and reminded the participants that achieving a formal peace agreement is not an end in itself. Peace will not come about merely because of a formal agreement, the need for tough decisions to be made also exists in the process of negotiating a permanent peace within the framework of a formal agreement. The international community, in addition to civil society, has a role to play in ensuring that peace processes move forward under the principles that are agreed upon. Some of the possible roles for the international community include providing transitional justice, setting up of dispute settlement mechanisms, and administration of a truth and reconciliation commission. He warned against potential pitfalls, such as competition among international aid organisations and donors as well as the tendency for various parties involved to interpret the terms of the peace agreement differently.

On the role of the international community, Wolff pointed out that entities such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund tend to make their assistance conditional on recipient countries. Receiving countries or entities are often required to comply with certain requirements, including those related to the implementation of conflict settlement agreements, or face cuts in aid and development assistance. He also pointed to the UN and NATO interventions in Bosnia and Kosovo in 1995 and 1999, respectively, as well as the Australian-led intervention in the Solomon Islands, and the US and UK-enforced no-fly zone over the Kurdistan region of Iraq, as examples of regional and international organisations that employed force to compel conflicting parties to achieve a settlement.

A window of opportunity is often created when conflicting parties come face to face. However, the literature does not say anything about whether this opportunity will be taken, what kind of settlement will be agreed, or whether an adopted settlement will be stable. The complexity of a conflict makes the initiation of an inclusive, meaningful negotiation process the foremost challenge for the international community. Firstly, it has to be made clear to all parties involved that, in the absence of easy solutions, a readiness to compromise and a willingness to settle for less than their maximum demands is the essential prerequisite for any stable long-term solution.

In explaining success and failure of international and regional conflict regulation, Professor Wolff argued that by employing a levels-of-analysis approach to the study of ethnic conflicts and their regulation, and identifying the environments within which different actors operate, we can reach a fuller understanding of why regional and international efforts to prevent, manage and settle such conflicts have a decidedly mixed track record. He points to Bosnia and Herzegovina, for example, where 40,000 UN peace keepers in a mission that cost around $4.5 billion over three years, failed to prevent some of the worst atrocities seen in Europe since the end of the Second World War. In Somalia, similarly, the deployment and subsequent withdrawal of some 22,000 military personnel and the expenditure of $1.6 billion did not manage to save the country from collapse. Compared with these two experiences, the international failure in Rwanda was materially cheap (5,000 UN peace keepers at the peak of deployment, $450m), but the human cost was tremendous. Almost one million Tutsis were killed in the course of an eight-month-long genocide. On the other hand, the examples of Northern Ireland, South Tyrol, Gagauzia, Macedonia, Aceh, to name just a few, indicate that regional and international efforts are by no means necessarily futile, but can result in successful conflict management operations and lead to sustainable conflict settlements.

On the basis of the foregoing analysis and a range of wider empirical work, there appears to be three particular factors that can help explain the success and failure of regional and international conflict regulation. The first is the domestic context of the conflict. For negotiations to succeed, there must be mutual acknowledgement and

recognition of the legitimacy of the concerns of the other side and their right to co-existence with their distinct identity intact. Moreover, settlements have a greater chance of being sustainable if the negotiations are followed by sincere efforts to implement the negotiated agreements. The second factor is the settlement content. Having a dispute settlement mechanism and institutions in place make the acceptance of negotiated settlement within and across society more likely. Third is the nature, timing, and scope of international involvement itself. The impact of sustained, well-resourced, and well-informed interventions by regional and/or international actors during the negotiation, implementation, and operation of peace settlements cannot be underestimated. Such involvement sends important signals to the conflicting parties. It enables them to find solutions to their problems, and it can contribute to managing domestic and external spoilers in a way that limit the damage that they can do to the successful conclusion of any peace process. In this sense, regional and international involvement can help improve the odds of crafting a settlement that is viable and sustainable and it can help change the domestic context by empowering those parties that support peace and facilitate the transition of those who may be reluctant to do so.

Dr. Mary Martin's case study on minority conflict in Kosovo and Georgia[2] began with an analysis of the nature of these two conflicts and points to some key issues for conflict resolution. Martin pointed out that a decade of international peacekeeping may have prevented an outbreak of large scale violence but its addressing of the deep-seated political and economic problems of the Albanian majority was flawed. The current arrangement also raised questions regarding the fate of the Serb minority. Martin said too much effort has been placed on traditional security and the formal status of the conflicting parties and warring factions but not enough attention was given to the issue of human security. She suggested that mediators and peace-builders come up with ways to quantify the damages in such a way that ordinary people could understand and relate to. In other words, all stake holders and aid donors must place the needs of the affected communities high on their priority list. The geopolitical approach tended to dominate in both conflicts, especially once the initial crisis and the sense of humanitarian emergency passed, in spite of the fact that territorial security and human security do not imply opposing approaches but are deeply intertwined.

In Kosovo, Serbia's persecution of the ethnic Albanian majority led to the NATO intervention in 1999, followed by nearly a decade of international administration under the UN Mission and later succeeded in 2008 by two international missions. Together with a continued NATO presence, the two missions formed the pillars of the conflict resolution package. Former Finnish president and Nobel laureate Martti Ahtisaari, the then UN envoy, proposed a plan that acknowledged the grievances of ethnic Albanians in Kosovo and qualified them for independence on the condition that separate Serb municipalities be created with an institutional link to Belgrade, the capital of Serbia. Russia opposed the plan and blocked its approval at the UN Security Council. The stalemate lasted for a year and ended with the so-called "co-ordinated" declaration of independence by Kosovo Albanians on 17 February 2008. Serbia sought a judicial review of Kosovo's declaration of independence from the International Criminal Court and the initial arguments by both Serbia and Kosovo were presented to the Hague tribunal in April 2009. Indeed, after a decade of conflict resolution in Kosovo, the status of the Albanian majority is still an unresolved issue. The NATO presence has helped to contain ethnic violence between the two sides but Kosovar society remains deeply divided.

The conflict in Georgia, more so than in Kosovo, is an illustration of how the issue of human security struggles to compete with the dominant narrative of geopolitics - where international powers and their proxies compete for influence, territory and resources. The people of Abkhaz and Ossetia feel that the boundary imposed upon their communities in 1991 after the breakup of the Soviet Union was wrongly drawn. South Ossetia, as well as Abkhazia, found itself part of the sovereign territory of Georgia after the 1991 break up of the Soviet Union. The latest round of fighting broke out in August 2008 when the Georgian government attempted to crack down on the separatist movement in South Ossetia by moving on the regional capital of Tshkinvali. The move was a response to separatists' raids on ethnic Georgian villages. It was also in response to Russia's overt support of

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2   For the full text of "Case Study on minority conflicts in Kosovo and Georgia", by Mary Martin (Centre for the Study of Global Governance, London School of Economic, 2009), please refer to www.asef.org, www.fes-asia.org , or www.siiaonline.org

the separatists. Moscow retaliated to Georgia's attack on Tshkinvali by invading Georgian territory, bombed its cities and moved its tanks and soldiers to within 30 miles of the capital, Tbilisi. Both South Ossetia and Abkhazia declared unilateral independence from Georgia. Subsequently, Russia and Nicaragua recognised their declarations of independence. A ceasefire was quickly brokered by French President Nicholas Sarkozy.

The tension between Tbilisi, the capital of Georgia, and the rural populations, all with very different cultural perspectives, underlies their urge for separatism. Moreover, South Ossetia is closely linked to North Ossetia, which is part of Russia. It could also be said that the minority disputes in this region are part of a strategic struggle for hegemony and influence between Russia and "the West". A NATO membership for Georgia could put it one step closer towards membership in the EU.

From another perspective, the conflict in Georgia is about human security. Pockmarked by nearly two decades of conflict, residents in South Ossetia and Abkhazia have found it difficult to earn a living and send their children safely to school. In both Kosovo and Georgia there now exists an internationalised peace brought about through extensive outside intervention by multiple actors working at all levels to provide public goods and services. The search for a sustainable peace has proven to be difficult. In the case of Kosovo, 3 billion euros of donor assistance between 1999 and 2001 has scarcely improved the situation of individuals in the last decade. In both places, the search for peace has been overshadowed by the focus on states, reflecting the mindset in Western societies that still includes and places emphasis on state structure as a prominent framework for peace, despite the recognition of war as being fundamentally different from the interstate model. In her criticism, Martin said that the task of rebuilding states to carry out the external functions of statehood is often seen as a more urgent priority than building a functional framework that provides public goods and services.

Edgardo Pedro Legaspi's case studies of ethnic minority conflict in southern Thailand and the southern Philippines[3] illustrate how the lack of political will from governments can be a major hindrance to finding a peaceful solution to conflict. He said that the military-led approach continues to be the dominant strategy of these two governments in handling the conflicts, despite public acknowledgement that a lasting solution lies in a strategy of political compromise. Legaspi argued that ASEAN's long-standing policy of non-interference does not permit the ten-member regional grouping from playing any meaningful role in these two conflicts. He argued that the governments of Thailand and the Philippines must adopt a different mindset and bear the political cost of this decision if they wish to see permanent peace in these two ongoing conflicts.

Citing Deep South Watch's statistics, Legaspi pointed out that between January 2004-March 2009, Thailand's deep South has witnessed more than 8,810 violent incidents, resulting in 3,418 deaths and 5,624 injuries. Most of the victims were Muslims. Insurgents have primarily employed shooting, arson and bombings as dominant tactics in the campaign. To date, no group has come into the open to claim responsibility for the violence.

Estimated casualties from the separatist insurgency in Mindanao, on the other hand, range from 140,000 to 200,000, making it one of the bloodiest conflicts in the world. A peace agreement was reached with the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) in 1996 but fighting continues sporadically amidst negotiations with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), a splinter group of the MNLF and currently the strongest group of all the separatist groups in the Philippines. In August 2008, just as the Filipino government and the MILF was about to sign the Memorandum of Agreement on Ancestral Domain (MOA-AD - being the key substantive stage for the peace process, local and national politicians intervened on a technicality. A Supreme Court ruled that the draft agreement was "unconstitutional", thus making future negotiation uncertain.

Integration and assimilation seem to be the overriding objectives of Thailand and the Philippines in their dealings with minority populations as both states sought to form a national identity based on the dominant

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3   For the full text of " Case Studies of Ethnic Minority Conflicts in Southern Philippines and Southern Thailand" by Edgardo Pedro Legaspi, (ASEAN Program Southeast Asian Committee for Advocacy, 2009), please refer to www.asef.org, www.fes-asia.org or www.siiaonline.org

ethnic group, in spite of the reality that these two countries are multi-ethnic states. Furthermore, though it is apparently clear that in both cases, the Malays in southern Thailand and the Moros in southern Philippines do not embrace the monoethnic identity of the nation-state, the two governments have chosen to opt for military means to address the problem that basically centers on their legitimacy. The fact that armed separatist movements still thrive today, decades after their emergence, is a testimony to the failure of Thailand's and the Philippines' military approaches.

Unlike the Thais, the Philippines has started formal negotiations with the MNLF in 1976, but it was not until the ouster of Marcos in 1986 that Manila began to seriously employ negotiations as a strategy of conflict management. Thailand's approach to the insurgency in the historic Muslim homeland was mainly military. It was not until the 1980s that the government employed a quasi-political approach that involved the setting up of the Southern Border Provinces Administrative Centre (SBPAC) – along with a security wing, the Civilian-Police-Military 43 (CPM 43).

Thailand has been credited for the success of its approach in reducing the rate of insurgencies in the country's Malay-speaking South in the 1990s but could not explain the resurgence of insurgencies in 2004. Some linked the re-emergence of insurgency to policy missteps by the then prime minister Thaksin Shinawatra, including a culture of impunity among security officials assigned to the restive region. Thaksin was ousted in a coup in October 2006. His successor, General Surayud Chulanont, reinstated the SBPAC that Thaksin had dissolved in 2002, as well as reached out to the Malay community by unprecedentedly apologising for past atrocities and abuses. However, the insurgents did not reciprocate his peace-offering. Violence in the deep South continues unabated and the end is still nowhere in sight. Incidentally, a military approach in Thailand's southernmost provinces continues to be the dominant government strategy. A key element in this military approach is the use of insensitive and poorly trained paramilitary forces. Sub-contracting the security responsibility of the military to the paramilitary has not been consistent with the stated goal of the government to win the people's hearts and minds.

In comparison with Thailand, international actors have been given a bigger role in the Philippines. Over the recent years, Malaysia has assisted Thailand in facilitating a number of dialogue processes between the government and members of the longstanding separatist movements. But so far the Bangkok government has yet to come up with a policy for a peace process, much less negotiation with the militants. By contrast, the role of international actors has generally been more positive in contributing to conflict management in the Philippines. The Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) and its member states, Libya, Indonesia and Malaysia, have played a vital role in the reduction of violence in the southern Philippines. For the time being, peace talks between the government of the Philippines and the MILF have stalled following the Supreme Court ruling in 2008.

3. **"When, Who and How" of Conflict Management: The Success of ASEAN-EU Aceh Monitoring Mission**
   Justin Davies, the former chief-of-staff of the Aceh Monitoring Mission (AMM) - a joint effort between ASEAN and the European Union, made an extraordinarily complicated trip to join the meeting from his work in Kosovo to brief the 6th AER participants about the challenges of peace building in the Indonesian province. He suggested that the AMM civil-military model could be used to help bring about peace in southern Thailand and the Mindanao region in the southern Philippines, but also cautioned that there is no "one-size-fits-all" solution to any conflict. He pointed out that the transitional phase towards peace could be as challenging as the negotiation of a peace settlement. One of the reminders that the peace process has yet to reach its objective, he said, is the fact that many of the Free Aceh Movement (GAM) militants are still out of work. He suggested that it was in the best interest of the AMM to go into Aceh, accomplish the mission in an expeditious manner, and leave the area as soon as possible. The rationale was to neither linger in the area nor get involved in long term development as such tasks could be more appropriately carried out by others. Davies admitted that there was no existing institutional framework for the AMM and that much had to be improvised, such as the payment of accommodations for AMM staff and personnel.

The armed separatist movement in Aceh started in 1976 and since then an estimated 15,000 lives have been lost on all sides, not to mention the tens of thousands of people who have been displaced from their homes and villages. An attempt at a peace process between 2000-2002 failed, forcing separatists to go back into the jungle. The tsunami in 2004 that wrecked much of Aceh as well as other coastal areas in South and Southeast Asia ironically became the catalyst that led to renewed negotiations between the Indonesian government and the GAM movement. The two sides were able to reach this juncture when GAM dropped its demand for independence, while the government of Indonesia gave up military means and opted for a political solution to the conflict. It was a matter of the political willingness of both sides to come to the negotiating table that enabled a peaceful solution.

Davies illustrated the three phases of conflict management in Aceh; the negotiation of a memorandum of understanding with a clear timeline; the setting up of an Aceh Monitoring Mission; and the Implementation of the MoU. In the first phase of conflict management, it was only when a memorandum of understanding with a clear timeline was being negotiated, around 2005 that involved parties sensed that real peace was possible, said Davies. GAM wanted the involvement of the European Union while Jakarta, suspicious of the Europeans, opted for ASEAN countries. The second phase, said Davies, involved the setting up of an Aceh Monitoring Mission, which is comprised of observers and peacekeepers from the European Union and five ASEAN countries. He called this the "perfect synthesis" for this civil-military mission that, among other things, included human rights experts. The third phase involved the implementation of the MoU – policing, human rights reform and funding. The division of labour was more or less equally split between EU and ASEAN. This meant that each task force of an AMM unit would be made up of equal numbers of personnel from both the EU and ASEAN. Davies stressed the importance of empowering the local community to give them a sense of ownership in the peace process and added that it was a mistake that civil society and women were not included in the peace process from the very beginning. And in spite of sporadic gunfights in various pockets of this highly contested region where tens of thousands of lives had been cut short before the three-decade old conflict between the Indonesian government and the Free Aceh Movement (GAM) ended, the political will of the leaders of the conflicting parties as well as that of the international community, remained intact to see the peace processes through to completion.

4. **Cafe Conversations and Open Space**
    During the course of "Cafe Conversations", the participants of the 6th AER were able to share each others' perspectives on issues raised during the presentations by hopping from one cafe-style table to another. Participants were asked to share their personal experience of conflict and conflict resolution in the course of their personal and professional life, and to explain how initiatives from various actors and stake holders have helped or hindered the peace and reconciliation process. In the first round, participants were asked, "What experience do I have with regards to minority conflicts? What have I witnessed and how much am I involved with regards to minority conflicts in my own country?". Round two delved further into the theme under discussion and asked, "What factors enhanced or hindered the management of those conflicts?". The third and last round centred on the question of "What lessons and recommendations for successful conflict management can be drawn from my own experience as well as the (café) conversations?".

    There was a general agreement that a conflict has to be understood in its own unique context and the dispute must be presented fairly. But while an accurate picture of the situation is essential, there is also a need to explain the situation in a manner that the public finds accessible. For instance, quantifying the damages in such a way that ordinary people on the street can understand and relate to may be important. But as past and recent conflicts have shown, obstacles to peace may very well hinge on certain abstract notions that cannot be quantified, such as identity, demand for cultural space and/or historical recognition. After reconvening in a "whole group conversation", specific conclusions were drawn, along with possible actions that could be taken. These recommendations form the basis for the "**Key Messages and Recommmndations**" in the Executive Summary of this Special Report

During the "Open Space" session, participants were asked to take part in two cycles of conversations. The first cycle had three stations, each with its own topic for discussion. The first station addressed the issue of preventive measures for conflicts and the kinds of early warning signals one should look out for. A number of indicators, such as hate speeches and mass mobilisation of troops or civilians, were noted but it was generally agreed that more studies on this matter were needed. Station 2 addressed the issue of peace journalism, specifically, the role of the media in conflict prevention and/or peace settlement. It was agreed that getting the public to understand the issue at hand was extremely important, as their rejection of any official initiatives could derail an ongoing peace process. Just as important is the ability for the media to accurately and fairly address these sticky points. Besides informing the public, there were suggestions that the media should be used to help promote and at times, influence the political will of the policy makers. Station 3 stressed the need to protect and empower the weak and vulnerable in conflict areas as well as address the geo-strategic interests of stake holders. Intercultural dialogue on the ground also needs to be enhanced and any support directed at strengthening these efforts has to be thoroughly examined in order to ensure that it reaches the intended target groups. It was also noted that the role of the diaspora in conflict resolution and management has traditionally been overlooked and it was generally agreed that more attention and studies should be given to this topic.

During the second cycle, the participants joined up the various conclusions of their discussions in order to refine their points and positions. They then agreed as a group that in the context of ASEM, the EU and ASEAN should be given serious consideration within a regional framework of conflict management. Participants pointed to the success of the ASEAN-EU Aceh Monitoring Mission as an example of a model that could be built upon. Moreover, if possible, this regional framework should, to some extent, be institutionalised. The role of ASEAN and the type of contribution the regional bloc can offer in conflict resolution and conflict management should be seriously examined and explored, despite the regional grouping's longstanding policy of non-interference. There was a suggestion that the Asia-Europe Foundation could take the lead in promoting and encouraging ASEM and ASEAN leaders to send a joint mission to conflict regions in southern Thailand and the Mindanao region of the Philippines.

5. **Dialogue with Local Community Leaders**
   University of Ulster's Professor Brandon Hamber facilitated a meeting between AER participants and local community leaders in Northern Ireland where they shared their thoughts on three decades of sectarian violence In Northern Ireland and the challenges facing their communities. The discourse shed light on the complexity of the problems local communities faced in coming to terms with their recent and tumultuous past. For instance, while a formal peace agreement between the warring factions has been signed, relations between the Catholic and Protestant communities remain tense. Participants at the 6th AER also learnt of positive developments in peace and reconciliation initiatives. The community leaders shared accounts of the formation of a wide range of activities geared toward reaching out to different sectors of society, including women's groups and religious communities, as a means of striving towards a permanent and sustainable peace and reconciliation. One civic group talked about their organisation's work in bringing together women from both sides of the political spectrum to share their thoughts, pains and sorrows as part of a healing process, while another reached out to the younger generation of Catholics and Protestants, in order to get them involved in the political processes and enable them to understand that they, too, have a stake in the outcome of this ongoing peace process that has helped to put an end to the sectarian violence in Northern Ireland.

   The participants were privileged to be addressed by **Mary Coughlan, An Tánaiste of Ireland**, *Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment* and **Martin McGuinness, Deputy First Minister for Northern Ireland** at the closing event of the 6th AER. The closing event introduced the International Fund for Ireland and the various projects that this fund has sponsored. These include the Youthlinks Project, Wider Horizons, Football4Peace Ireland, Core Digital Network and Balor DCA. To sum up, these projects provide opportunities for young people and adults from various communities to engage in meaningful dialogue regarding the legacy of the sectarian conflict. The aim of this healing process is to build meaningful relationships at the grassroots level between communities on both sides of the political border, Ireland and Northern Ireland. AER participants also had the honour of observing the opening of the Regional Special Olympic Games and witnessed the positive energy of the community as friends, family members, community leaders and elected representatives came together at a local sport stadium to mark the opening of the event.

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1. Group Photograph with **His Excellency Cho Taeyong** (first row, 3rd from left) and Nobel Laureate **Prof. John Hume** (first row, 4th from left), Magee Campus, University of Ulster.

2. Group Photograph, Regional Cultural Centre, Letterkenny.

3. Presentation, Magee Campus, University of Ulster.

4. Facilitated "World Café" Group Discussions, Magee Campus, University of Ulster.

5. Presentation on the "When, Who and How of Conflict Management", Letterkenny Institute of Technology.

6. Facilitated "Open Space" Group Discussions, Letterkenny Institute of Technology.

7. Clockwise from top left: **Mr Peter Ryan, Dr. Stefanie Elies, Mr. Willie McCarter, Mr. Paddy Harte, Mr. Paul Hannigan**, **Mr. Denis Rooney**, **An Tánaiste Mary Coughlan**, **Dr. Thomas Hardimann, Northern Ireland Deputy First Minister Martin McGuiness, Dr. Yeo Lay Hwee**, Regional Cultural Centre, Letterkenny.

ANNEXES

DAY 1 – WEDNESDAY 10TH JUNE

"Setting the Scene: An Informal Briefing on Northern Ireland":

Prof. Paul Arthur
Professor of Politics, University of Ulster

Welcome & Opening Session

Chair:
Mr. Willie McCarter,
Former Chairman of the International Fund for Ireland & Director, Cooley Distillery

Opening:
Dr. Brandon Hamber
Director, INCORE at the University of Ulster

Welcome Address:
Prof. John Hume
Nobel Laureate and Tip O'Neill Chair in Peace Studies

Keynote Address:
His Excellency Mr. Cho Taeyong
Ambassador of the Republic of Korea to Ireland

Remarks on behalf of the Organisers:

Dr. Paul Hannigan
President, Letterkenny Institute of Technology

Dr. Stefanie Elies
Director, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, Office for Regional Cooperation in Asia

DAY 2 – THURSDAY 11TH JUNE

Introductory Session

Background and Objectives of the AER:

Dr. Yeo Lay Hwee
Senior Research Fellow, Singapore Institute of International Affairs (SIIA)

Plenary One – Presentation of Background Introduction and two Case Studies

Moderator:
Dr. Yeo Lay Hwee
Senior Research Fellow, Singapore Institute of International Affairs (SIIA)

Background Introduction:

Dr. Brandon Hamber
Director of INCORE, University of Ulster

Dr. Mary Alice Clancy
INCORE

Dr. John Nagle
INCORE

Introductory Presentation: "International and Regional Conflict Management: Patterns of Success and Failure"

Prof. Stefan Wolff
Professor, School of Politics and International Relations, University of Nottingham

Presentation of Case Studies: Case Study Asia

Mr. Edgardo Pedro Legaspi
Program Associate of the ASEAN Program, Southeast Asian Committee for Advocacy

Presentation of Case Studies: Case Study Europe

Dr. Mary Martin
Co-ordinator of The Centre for the Study of Global Governance's Study Group on Human Security

Introduction to Café Conversations and Open Space

Ms. Janice Lua
Co-Founder of Facilitators Network Singapore

Mr. Oliver Hegarty
Facilitator

Breakout Sessions (Café Conversations)

Facilitated by **Ms. Janice Lua & Mr. Oliver Hegarty**

Plenary Two - Preliminary Conclusions from the Café Conversations

Facilitated by **Ms. Janice Lua & Mr. Oliver Hegarty**

Local Walking Tour of Derry

Mr. Martin McCrossan
Local Guide

Dinner Dialogue with Local Groups & Representatives

Facilitated by **Dr. Brandon Hambe***r*

DAY 3 – FRIDAY 12TH JUNE

Plenary Three – Presentation on "When, Who and How" of Conflict Management

> **Setting the Stage: Open Space:**
>
> > *Facilitated by* **Ms. Janice Lua & Mr. Oliver Hegarty**

> **Presentation on "When, Who and How" of Conflict Management**
>
> > **Moderator:**
> > **Ms. Elina Noor**
> > *Analyst, Bureau of Foreign Policy and Security, ISIS Malaysia*
> >
> > **Paper Writer & Presenter:**
> > **Mr. Justin Davies**
> > *Former Chief of Staff of the Aceh Monitoring Mission*

Breakout Sessions (Open Space)

> *Facilitated by* **Ms. Janice Lua & Mr. Oliver Hegarty**

Wrap-up Session: Recommendations and Suggestions on Minority Conflict Management and Issues within ASEM or other Asia-Europe Frameworks

> > **Moderator:**
> > **Dr. Stefanie Elies**
> > *Director, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, Office for Regional Cooperation in Asia*
> >
> > **Rapporteur:**
> > **Mr. Don Pathan**
> > *Journalist, The Nation*

Closing Remarks on Behalf of the Organisers:

> > **Dr. Thomas P. Hardiman**
> > *ASEF Governor for Ireland*

Dinner Dialogue with Mary Coughlan T.D., *An Tánaiste of Ireland, Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment & Martin McGuinness, Deputy First Minister for Northern Ireland, and Local Groups & Representatives*

> *Facilitated by* **Mr. Paddy Harte**, *International Fund for Ireland (IFI)*

> **Launch of "Sharing Stories Project":**
>
> > **Mr. Denis Rooney**
> > *Chairman, International Fund for Ireland (IFI)*

> **Closing Speech:**
>
> > **Ms. Mary Coughlan**
> > *An Tánaiste of Ireland, Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment*
> >
> > **Mr. Martin McGuinness**
> > *Deputy First Minister for Northern Ireland*

> **Formal Closing Remarks:**
>
> > **Mr. Paul Hannigan**
> > *President, Letterkenny Institute of Technology*

Opening Ceremony for Special Olympics – Cross-border Event

PARTICIPANTS' LIST

PARTICIPANTS

1. **Mr. d'Alancon**, **François,** Journalist, La Croix, France

2. **His Excellency Cho Taeyong,** Ambassador of the Republic of Korea to Ireland, Korea

3. **Mr. Davalga, Adomas,** Project Coordinator, European Integration Studies Centre, Lithuania

4. **Mr. Davies, Justin**, Former Chief of Staff, Aceh Monitoring Mission

5. **Ms. Economidou, Katie**, Conflict Analyst, The Peace Centre Cyprus, Cyprus

6. **Mr. Fagasinski, Maciej**, Researcher, Legal Assistance to Refugees and Migrants Programme, Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights, Poland

7. **Dr. Giessmann, Hans J.,** Director, Berghof Research Center for Constructive Conflict Management, Germany

8. **Senator Haider, Iqbal**, Co-Chairperson of Human Right Commission of Pakistan, Pakistan

9. **Dr. Hamber, Brandon,** Director, University of Ulster, Northern Ireland

10. **Professor Hume, John,** Tip O'Neill Chair in Peace Studies, University of Ulster, Northern Ireland

11. **Dr. Hwang Jaeho**, Research Fellow, Korea Institute of Defense Analyses, South Korea

12. **Dr. Kivimäki, Timo,** Senior Researcher, Nordic Institute of Asian Studies, Finland

13. **Dr. Kobayashi, Yuka,** Lecturer, School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, Japan

14. **Mr. Kretalovs, Deniss,** Expert, Senior Office, Department of Integration Affairs, Ministry of Children, Family and Integration Affairs of the Republic of Latvia, Latvia

15. **Mr. Legaspi, Edgardo Pedro,** Program Associate, South East Asian Committee for Advocacy, The Philippines

16. **Dr. Lu Yiyi**, Research Fellow, China Policy Institute, University of Nottingham, China

17. **Dr. Martin, Mary,** Research Fellow, London School of Economics, United Kingdom

18. **Dr. Neves, Miguel Santos**, Head, Asia Programme; Coordinator, Migrations Programme, Institute of International and Strategic Studies in Portugal, Portugal

19. **Dr. Nguyen Phuong Binh,** Director General, Department of Research Project Management, Diplomatic Academy of Vietnam, Vietnam

20. **Dr. Noor, Elina**, Analyst, Bureau of Foreign Policy and Security, ISIS Malaysia, Malaysia

21. **Dr. Peou, Sorpong**, Professor of International Security, Sophia University, Tokyo, Canada

22. **Mr. Pathan, Don**, Regional Desk Editor, The Nation, The United States of America

23. **Dr. Popovski, Vesselin,** Senior Academic Officer, United Nations University for Sustainability and Peace, Bulgaria

24. **Mr. Strážay, Tomáš,** Head, the Central and South-eastern Europe Research Program, Research Center of the Slovak Foreign Policy Association, Slovakia

25. **Ms. Stroja, Anna**, Co-founder, Member of the Board, Dialogi.lv (Ethnic Dialogue), Latvia

26. **Mr. Sysikaski, Kalle**, Vice President, Finnish AEPT Committee/Finnish Asiatic Society, Finland

27. **Dr. Tekwani, Shyamsunder,** Assistant Professor, Wee Kim Wee School of Communication & Information, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore, India

28. **Ms. Thephsouvanh, Vanida,** President, Lao Movement for Human Rights (Movement in Exile), France

29. **Mr. Tonchev, Plamen**, Head, Asia Unit, Institute of International Economic Relations, Greece

30. **Dr. Wolff, Stefan**, Professor, School of Politics and International Relations, University of Nottingham, Germany

31. **Mr. Yusoff, Anis Yusul,** Principal Research Fellow, Institute of Ethnic Studies (KITA), National University of Malaysia, Malaysia

OBSERVERS

32. **Dr. Allen, James,** Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Information and Student Services) and Provost (Magee), University of Ulster, Northern Ireland

33. **Professor Arthur, Paul,** Professor of Politics and Director, University of Ulster, Northern Ireland

34. **Dr. Bush, Kenneth,** Research Coordinator, INCORE

35. **Dr. Clancy, Mary Alice**, Research Associate, INCORE

36. **Ms. Cooke, Catherine**, Foyle Women's Information Network, Northern Ireland

37. **Mr. Dougherty, Brian,** Director, St Columb's Park House Centre for Reconciliation in the City, Northern Ireland

38. **Professor Fraser, Thomas,** Professor Emeritus of History and Honorary Professor of Conflict Research, INCORE

39. **Mr. Hannigan, Paul**, President, Letterkenny Institute of Technology, Ireland

40. **Mr. Harte, Paddy,** Senior Development Advisor, The International Fund for Ireland

41. **Ms. Kelly, Grainne**, Policy and Practice Coordinator, INCORE

42. **Mr. McCarter, Willie**, Former Executive Chairman, The International Fund for Ireland

43. **Mr. Morrow, Peter,** Former Chairman, Bishop Street Youth Club and Bishop Street Development Association. Volunteer, Peace and Reconciliation Group, Northern Ireland

44. **Dr. Nagle, John,** INCORE

45. **Mr. O'Connor, Paul,** Project Manager, Pat Finucane Centre, Northern Ireland

46. **Ms. Warke, Jeanette,** The Fountain Estate in The Cathedral Youth Club, Northern Ireland

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50. **Dr. Hardiman, Thomas**, P. Governor for Ireland, Asia-Europe Foundation

51. **Mr. Ryan, Peter**, Director, Intellectual Exchange, Asia-Europe Foundation

52. **Ms. Bieger, Beatrice,** Program Assistant, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Office for Regional Cooperation in Asia, Singapore

53. **Dr. Elies, Stefanie,** Director, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Office for Regional Cooperation in Asia, Singapore

54. **Mr. Spiegel, Karl-Heinz**, Director, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung in London

55. **Ms. Lu, Grace,** Researcher, Singapore Institute of International Affairs

56. **Dr. Yeo, Lay Hwee,** Senior Research Fellow, Singapore Institute of International Affairs

The **Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF)** advances mutual understanding and collaboration between the people of Asia and Europe through intellectual, cultural, and people-to-people exchanges. These exchanges include conferences, lecture tours, workshops, seminars and the use of web-based platforms. The major achievement of ASEF is the establishment of permanent bi-regional networks focussed on areas and issues that help to strengthen Asia-Europe relations.

Established in February 1997 by the partners of the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM)[4], ASEF reports to a board of governors representing the ASEM partners. ASEF is the only permanent physical institution of the ASEM process. Since 1997, the Foundation has initiated projects engaging 14,000 individuals from Asia and Europe. ASEF works in partnership with other public institutions and civil society actors to ensure its work is broad-based and balanced among the partner countries.

For more information, please visit http://www.asef.org

The **Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES)** was founded in 1925 as a political legacy of Germany´s first democratically elected president, Friedrich Ebert. Since the beginning of the foundation's work in South, Southeast and East Asia the focus has been the promotion of democracy and the strengthening of the social dimension of economic development. In the past few years, the international dialogue within Asia as well as between Asia and Europe, and the issue of crisis prevention have gained important stakes in the work of the foundation. In its work the foundation co-operates with a number of governmental institutions, trade unions, political parties, social movements, NGOs, media and scientific institutions, as well as international organizations.

The role of the Office for Regional Cooperation in Asia based in Singapore is to support the social dimension of Southeast and East Asian co-operation and integration, the Asia-Europe dialogue and partnership activities in the ASEAN member states Cambodia and Laos where there are no FES offices. The office's activities include dialogue programmes, international and regional conferences (e.g. on economic and social policy, regional integration and comprehensive security), Asia-Europe exchanges, research, as well as programmes with trade unions.

For more information, please visit www.fes-asia.org

The **Singapore Institute of International Affairs (SIIA)** is a non-profit, non-governmental organization dedicated to the research, analysis and discussion of regional and international issues. The SIIA aims to make Singapore a more cosmopolitan and global society through research, policy work and public education on international affairs. Founded in 1961 and registered as a membership-based society, it is Singapore's oldest think tank.

As a founding member of the ASEAN-Institutes for Strategic and International Studies (ASEAN-ISIS) network, the Institute works with its partner think-tanks to organize regional and international workshops and conferences to seek new thoughts and ideas. Accompanied by research and analysis, the SIIA shares its political, economic and security insights with politicians, policy-makers, business leaders, and opinion-leaders.

For more information, please visit http://www.siiaonline.org

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4   The **Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM)** is an informal process of dialogue and cooperation. It brings together Austria, Belgium, Brunei, Bulgaria, Cambodia, China, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Korea, Laos, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Malta, Mongolia, Myanmar, the Netherlands, Pakistan, the Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Thailand, United Kingdom, Vietnam, the ASEAN Secretariat and the European Commission. http://www.aseminfoboard.org

IN COOPERATION WITH

The **Letterkenny Institute of Technology (LYIT)** is a thriving third level education institution that has been providing higher education in Ireland's North West since 1971. It currently has almost 3,000 full-time students enrolled on undergraduate and postgraduate degree programmes. The college offers courses in a number of core disciplines including, business, tourism, engineering, science, nursing, computing, and design.

For more information, please visit http://www.lyit.ie/

The **Magee campus** of the **University of Ulster**, situated in the historic city of Derry, has been the fastest growing campus of the University. In 1983, there were just 100 students at Magee, today there are over 3,800.

The rapid growth in the Magee campus has been achieved by both further developing well-established subjects and by introducing a range of new subject areas. The overall aim of the development has been to build on the vocational orientation of many of the existing programmes and to introduce subjects that will contribute to the life of the city and the region.

For more information, please visit http://www.ulster.ac.uk/campus/magee/

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The Asia-Europe Roundtable is a series that aims to examine the nature of Asia and Europe, focusing on international relations issues, with a view to understanding both better and to identify and share best practices on solutions to common or contrasting problems. Six roundtables have been held since 2000:

1st AER "Regions in Transition"
August 2000 | Singapore

2nd AER "Trans-National Problem-Solving in a Global Era: Towards Multi-Level Governance?"
September 2001 | Oxford, United Kingdom
Co-hosted by the Centre for Globalisation and Regionalisation Studies, Warwick University, and Corpus Christi College, Oxford University

3rd AER "Peace and Reconciliation: Success Stories and Lessons from Asia and Europe"
October 2003 | Hanoi, Vietnam
Hosted by the Institute for International Relations (IIR) of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Vietnam

4th AER "Conflict Prevention: Actors, Institutions and Mechanisms"
April 2005 | Berlin, Germany

5th AER "Sustaining the Peace through Post-Conflict Reconstruction"
May 2007 | Singapore

The series is organised by the Asia-Europe Foundation, the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, and the Singapore Institute of International Affairs.

The inaugural AER was launched in Singapore in 2000, to present a broad overview of the transitions in the two regions. The 2nd AER was held in Oxford, UK, in 2001, and focused on the issue of global and regional governance and transnational problem-solving. The roundtable shifted from broader regional issues to a more specific focus on peace and security. The 3rd AER in Hanoi (2003) and the 4th AER in Berlin (2005) deepened bi-regional dialogue and promoted networking in the areas of conflict prevention as well as peace and reconciliation. The 5th AER focused on "Sustaining Peace through Post-Conflict Reconstruction".

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