The 1st Meeting of the Asia Europe Political Forum

(Seoul, July 9, 2017)

ICAPP/1AEPF/003 *draft as of 28 June*

Seoul statement on Launching the Asia Europe Political Forum (AEPF)

We, the representatives of political parties of Asia and Europe, from Azerbaijan, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Iran, Kazakhstan, the Republic of Korea, Lebanon, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Turkey, and Vietnam, which are represented in the Standing Committee of the International Conference of Asian Political Parties (ICAPP) as well as from European People's Party (EPP), Party of European Socialists, European Conservatives and Reformists Group (ECR), and Alliance of Conservatives and Reformists in Europe (ACRE), held the 1st meeting of the Asia Europe Political Forum (AEPF) in Seoul, Korea under the auspices of the ICAPP Secretariat and the ICAPP Parliamentarians' Union in the Korean National Assembly on the 9th July 2017 back-to-back with the 28th Meeting of the ICAPP Standing Committee.

We, the representatives of the ICAPP Standing Committee and major groups of political parties in the European Parliament (EP), agreed to launch the AEPF with the Terms of Reference (ToR) attached herewith. We shared the view that the launching of the AEPF bears great significance, considering that the exchanges and cooperation between the ICAPP and the major groups of political parties in the EP will effectively contribute to addressing the common challenges such as climate change, terrorism, migration, and populism in politics.

In today's meeting, we had a productive discussion on the two main themes of "Climate Change" and "Populism in Politics."

We, the representatives of political parties of Asia and Europe, after presentation delivered by a Korean expert on climate change, reaffirmed that climate change is one of the greatest threats to our planet. Without effective cooperation among the relevant stakeholders, we may encounter tremendous losses in our life, economy and ecosystem. In particular, we expressed our concerns on vulnerable impacts on Small Island Countries, developing countries and countries in need of water resources. We recognized it is vital to promote energy efficiency, renewable energies and other low carbon technologies for both curing Green House Gas (GHG) emissions and ensuring sustainable development in Asia and Europe.

In this regard, we welcomed the Paris Agreement as the fundamental ground for the implementation of low carbon economy. We were certain that the Paris Agreement will play a central role in promoting low carbon technologies and green investments. We also believed necessary financial and technological assistances need to be provided to developing countries as well as countries that may be in special needs for such assistances.

For the implementation of the Paris Agreement, we noted that Green Climate Fund (GCF), along with other global financial organizations such as Global Environment Facility and the World Bank, will play a catalyst role in mobilizing resources. We also noted regional development banks such as Asia Development Bank and European Bank for Reconstruction and Development are important financial organizations for the implementation of the Paris Agreement as well. Other relevant organizations such as Global Green Growth Institute and Asia Infrastructure Investment Bank will also contribute to enlarging capacity of Asia and Europe for the implementation of the Paris Agreement.

We recognized Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are integral parts of the implementation of the Paris Agreement. Continuous endeavors need to be made to address the nexus between climate change and SDGs. We firmly believed effective implementation of climate change policies can be an important element of achieving SDGs by 2030.

In addition, we recognized subnational bodies of cities and provinces are key actors in implementing the Paris Agreement. Business and civil society organizations also need to be integrated into the process of implementation of the Paris Agreement. Future generations will be also keys to the successive execution of climate change policies. We, the Standing Committee Members of the ICAPP and representatives of major groups of political parties of the European Parliament (EP), will be a catalyst in building governance where all the actors can work together and will make our efforts to develop process on implementation of the Paris Agreement in Asia and Europe.

After reviewing the historical accounts of populism in politics in certain countries, we acknowledged that while populism displays its characteristic of accommodating the general public's dissatisfaction with the bleak reality, we need to pay greater attention to avoid such movements as advocating extreme agenda such as fascism. We also shared the view that traditional leaders will have to experiment with new ideas and bolder moves in order to overwhelm all the forces that are conducive to spreading chaos and anarchy through their hate-based ideologies and quick-fix strategies.

(Input from EP on populism?)

After having brief discussion on additional topic on "Asia-Europe Connectivity, we shared

the view that promoting connectivity between Asia and Europe is crucial for pursuing prosperity and stability of the two regions, and therefore, we have agreed to make greater efforts to enhance the connectivity between the two regions in terms of trade, investment, personnel exchange, freer movement of people and goods, and cultural and tourism cooperation. It was also highlighted that the closer cooperation amongst the political parties in the two regions is essential to successfully handle such global challenges as poverty and environmental degradation. In this regards, the important role of media was once again emphasized with wide coverage of news and programs which would enhance the mutual understanding between the peoples in Asia and Europe, building a basis for stronger connectivity between the two regions.

Before closing the meeting, we expressed our hope that the new-born AEPF will continue to grow in the future as a meaningful and useful platform connecting Asia and Europe, thus becoming another major channel between the two regions, next to the Asia Europe Meeting (ASEM), which boasts its history over 20 years. In addition, we further expressed our hope that more delegates will participate in and contribute to the Forum next time, especially from the major groups of political parties of the EP.

We expressed our deepest gratitude to the Seoul Metropolitan City, the ICAPP Parliamentarians' Union in the Korean Assembly and the Secretariat of the ICAPP for the excellent preparations for our meeting and the warm hospitality extended to us during our stay.

Encl.: Terms of Reference for the Asia Europe Political Forum (AEPF)

Adopted in Seoul, Korea on 9th July 2017