

## THE BARCELONA PREPARATORY MEETINGS FOR THE THIRD BIENNIAL OF THE FORUM

27 - 28 November 2008

( Media release )



The Barcelona preparatory meeting on 27 and 28 November at the **Casa Asia** in partnership with **the Government of Catalonia** was a great success. Mr. Etienne Reuter, Senior Adviser at the Directorate General for External Relations of the European Commission, Mr Angel Cortadelles, the Director General for International Relations of the Secretariat for Foreign Affairs of the government of Catalonia, Mrs Anna Martinez, the Secretary General of the Casa Asia, David Ip, Professor at the Polytechnic University of Hong Kong and Mr Pierre Calame, President of the China-Europa Forum Foundation, attended the opening session together with more than 60 participants representing universities, research institutes, foundations, associations and media from Spain, France, Greece, Portugal, Hungary, Germany, Italy, the Republic Czech, the UK, Suisse and Hong Kong at the Casa Asia.

Mr. Etienne Reuter, Mr Angel Cortadelles. Professor David Ip and Mr Pierre Calame welcomed those present. In his speech, Mr. Etienne Reuter said: " The European Commission is very happy to support the China-Europa Forum in their constructing of the society to society dialogue between China and Europe."

Mr Pierre Calame gave the introduction regarding the spirit and independent initiative of the Forum as well as the success of the Second Forum in Europe last year. He outlined the process and organisation of the third biennial of the Forum that will take place in Hong Kong in July 2009 and encouraged everyone to play an active role in the dialogue between the societies of Europe and China. Mr Calame estimated that when we are beginning to dialogue, we can learn much more each other in the confrontation of the opinions.

The meeting took place in two phases. The first day was based on collected data and the 60 participants worked in six small groups, as Group1A : Values, religion,

science and technology, media ; Group1B : Art, Culture, Education ; Group 2 : Society, social organisation, lifestyles ; Group 3 : Economy, production and the markets, labour, consumers, financing bodies ; Group 4 : Objectives, modes and scales of governance, from local to global ; Group 5 : The relationship between humankind and the biosphere ; natural resources management. The objectif is to exchanging information and looking for potential partners. After three hours of dynamic discussion they proposed 9 new workshop themes which will now be added to the current list of 145 proposals of themes.

On the second day, Mr Calame analysed the proposed new workshops based on the four pillars of Forum and he explained that the third biennial is different than last biennial, for which the organisers selected all the workshops to reflect the diversity of the socio-professional environment and of the challenges for both societies. This time, the third biennial favours a "self organised" process, Europeans and Chinese make proposals of themes they would like to discuss with their counterpart and search for the various stakeholders who could be involved in the workshop to ensure its durability: the pillars.

In the conclusion session, Mr Maurizio Mariani who organised in Turin last year the workshop « Sustainable Agro food Supply chain » , Mr. Pierre Bauby, organiser of the workshop « Services Publics » in Bucarest, and also other former organisers of the workshops have delivered to the audience on their experience, mainly, on how to define the problem of the workshop ; how to find the Chinese participants and how to contact local authorities.

At the end of the session, Mr Calame showed on how to use the Forum website, how to contribute interactive spaces in the Forum Wiki and how to stay informed about the next steps towards the Forum.

The press conference was held just before the opening session, Mr Pierre Calame, Mr Etienne Reuter and Professor David Ip presented first their view on organising and supporting the third China-Europa Forum. After that, each one answered questions of the reporters coming from French, Spain and Chinese press, representing La Croix ( France ), El Pais ( Spain ), RFI ( France ), Magazine Asia (France), People's Daily ( China ) and China News Agency based in Brussels.

The Barcelona meeting is the second of three European preparatory meetings organised with the financial support of the Directorate General for External Relations of the European Commission and the support of the Committee of the Regions. The third meeting in Saarbrücken will be held on 5 and 6 December in partnership with the ASKO EUROPA-STIFTUNG at the European Academy of Otzenhausen.