

PREFACE

Connectivity is the most visible face of the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM). ASEM is a multilateral platform linking Asia and Europe for cooperation in broad-ranging areas – economic, political, and people – and ASEM connectivity provides the mechanisms for such cooperation. Through connectivity, ASEM can strengthen its ability to address global challenges and deliver local results.

The 12th ASEM Summit in Brussels is meeting under the theme of ‘Global Partners for Global Challenges’. A freshly energised and revamped ASEM connectivity mechanism will address the theme’s issues before ASEM’s formal and informal stakeholders. The *Brussels Report on Strengthening ASEM Connectivity: Drawing Synergy from Development Programmes and Global Governance* is a contribution to the 12th ASEM Summit for enabling ASEM and its connectivity mechanisms to establish linkages with the objectives of global development programmes and to support the global governance mechanisms that add value to ASEM’s vision of connectivity. In doing so, ASEM connectivity can strengthen itself.

The *Brussels Report* fulfils the theme of the Brussels Summit and builds on the ASEM connectivity vision laid out in the *Asia-Europe Connectivity Vision 2025: Challenges and Opportunities*, presented at the 11th ASEM Summit in 2016. It provides the interlinkages that will support ASEM in placing its strength behind global programmes and partnerships.

When the European Union started the preparations for the 12th ASEM Summit, I was inducted into its preparatory activities. The *Brussels Report on Strengthening ASEM Connectivity* is preceded by two important contributions on ASEM Connectivity – the ASEM Monitor of Sustainable Connectivity and the ASEM Connectivity Inventory.

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The *Brussels Report* lays out the roadmap for ASEM connectivity beyond 2018 and recommends ASEM to forge stronger interlinkages with other multilateral partners. It makes ASEM connectivity visible and determinate.

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