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Festivals

Open doors. Open minds.
Build societies!

The cultural exchange between Asian and European countries has a long history of richness and diversity. Arts and Culture have played, and will continue to play an important role in the exchanges between the two continents and its people. In the past decades, festivals have made key contribution to this process and today build a strong element in the development of mutual understanding.

Festivals have a transformative power in our societies and trigger social harmony. By providing audiences access to a diversity of artists, artistic and cultural ideas and projects, Festivals help improve the quality of life. In the framework of EFA's 2010 flagship project "Open The Door" and under the motto "Festivals: Open Doors. Open Minds. Build Societies!", the European Festivals Association (EFA) and the Association of Asian Performing Arts Festivals (AAPAF) call upon the force of Festivals all over the world to contribute to awareness-raising and to the recognition of Festivals' transformative power.

EFA and AAPAF have – in their respective networks – brought together festivals from across Europe, Asia and the world – regardless of political boundaries or borders.

We believe that the variety of inherent values culture and international cultural collaboration bring about must become a focal point of Asia-Europe relations. Given the deserved recognition, arts and culture form a chance to support the development of a cultural Europe, a cultural Asia and an exchange that is enriching for both continents.

COMMITMENT

Open The Door to Arts and Culture. Open The Door for Dialogue between European and Asian Festivals.

25 – 29 September 2010, Shanghai / China
in the framework of the International Festival Conference
hosted by China Shanghai International Arts Festival

Therefore, all signing parties agree that

- ◆ **artists, arts and culture** are key to **opening peoples' minds**;
- ◆ **festivals** are important platforms for **artists** to create and to present their works internationally;
- ◆ **festivals** open doors to intercultural societies and **strengthen civic and social ties**;
- ◆ the **cultural sector** has an enormous potential to foster the **development and integration** of regions both in Europe and in Asia including their intangible cultural heritage;
- ◆ **joint activities** in the field of cultural cooperation are essential means and the best ways to **overcome bigotry, ignorance prejudice**;
- ◆ **associations, NGOs and other stakeholders** – such as EFA, AAPAF and ASEF – play an important role as **facilitator and reference platforms of cultural interactions** between Asia and Europe, and longer term relationships are key for successful collaboration.

Therefore, all signing parties urge that

- ◆ **mobility of artists and cultural operators, training for young festival managers as well as joint meeting moments** in both regions and between the regions **need to be strongly supported** in order to allow for exchange of innovative ideas and talents that benefit Asian and European societies;
- ◆ a **coordinated, joint communication strategy** including traditional and new interactive media **need to be developed and supported**;
- ◆ **funding opportunities** for cultural actions, organisations and festivals that enhance Asia-Europe co-operation, civil society dialogue, mobility and access to arts and culture **need to be advanced**;
- ◆ the **development of an independent cultural sector needs to be supported** in the long-term – in political, structural as well as in financial terms.

The undersigning parties commit to continuing the dialogue between Asian and European actors at all levels also beyond the 'Shanghai Commitment' through concrete joint actions such as:

- ◆ the setting up of a **joint agenda** for future **collaboration and advocacy activities**;
- ◆ **training** / peer to peer learning opportunities for emerging festival directors, curators and managers;
- ◆ regular **joint networking meetings** in Asia and in Europe hosted by a member festival and in collaboration with EFA and AAPAF;
- ◆ the establishment of a joint **platform of exchange and communication efforts**.

Signing parties

- ◆ **The Association of Asian Performing Arts Festivals (AAPAF) on behalf of its members**
- ◆ **The European Festivals Association (EFA) on behalf of its members**
- ◆ **The China Shanghai International Arts Festival (CSIAF) on behalf of the participants of the International Festival Conference**
- ◆ **The Asia-Europe Foundation**

All participating festivals, organisations and individuals represented at the International Festival Conference Shanghai hosted by the China Shanghai International Arts Festival (CSIAF) on 28 September are invited to sign the commitment at www.Open-The-Door.eu.