

Asian-African Summit, April 2005

The Asian-African Summit 2005 and the Commemoration of the Golden Jubilee of the Asian-African Conference 1955 was held in Jakarta on 22-23 April and in Bandung on the 24 April 2005.

The theme of the Summit, “Reinvigorating the Bandung Spirit: Working Towards a New Asian-African Strategic Partnership”, marked the dawn of a new era of cooperation among countries of the two regions towards a peaceful and prosperous future.

The New Asian-African Strategic Partnership (NAASP) is a vehicle to enable the countries of Asia and Africa to cooperate for their mutual benefit and is intended to promote peace, prosperity and progress in the two regions.

The success of the Summit is illustrated by the attendance of 85 Asian and African countries, as well as 19 Sub Regional and International Organisations. This signifies recognition of the importance of the vision for re-invigorating the Spirit of Bandung. There was a strong display of political will and determination to forge a new strategic partnership between Asia and Africa reflected in **The Declaration on the New Asian African Strategic Partnership**. The statements made by leaders clearly identified that co-operative efforts must be based on a partnership that yields mutual benefit for the people of our continents. The Summit was a culmination of previous conferences and preparatory meetings aimed at establishing regional co-operation between the continents of Asia and Africa on matters of common interest. **The Joint Ministerial Statement on the New Asian-African Strategic Partnership Plan of Action** translated the Declaration into concrete actions.

A report on various studies was commissioned in preparation for the launch of the NAASP. These identified specific, concrete and practical steps that could become flagship agenda areas of co-operation in a Plan of Action for realising the NAASP. Minister Dlamini Zuma at the Ministerial Meeting presented the **Report on the Studies**.

Natural disasters such as earthquake and tsunami tidal waves wreak unmitigated, indiscriminate devastation and undermines the progress of social and economic development. These natural disasters of unprecedented scale underline the importance of the adoption by the international community of pro-active measures to address the issues of disaster reduction, mitigation and management. In recognition of the need to minimise the impact and effect of such disasters **The Joint Asian-African Leaders’ Statement on Tsunami, Earthquakes and Other Natural Disasters** was adopted at the Summit.

Various side-events were held to encourage co-operation in the fields of renewable energy, business and women and youth. Outcomes documents were

produced in relation to these side events establishing concrete areas of co-operation in the above-mentioned fields. These were:

- (a) World Renewable Energy Congress and Exhibition from 17-21 April 2005;
- (b) Asian-African Business Summit from 21-22 April 2005;
- (c) Trade Fair from 18-20 April 2005; and
- (d) Asian-African Workshop on the role of Women and Youth in furthering Asia-Africa Cooperation on 19 April 2005;

Officials, business leaders, professionals, and leading SME's from both continents participated in the **Business Summit and Trade Fair**. These two events provided opportunities to promote trade and investment, with a view to stimulating and strengthening Asian-African private sector cooperation and partnership. Seven African and ten Asian countries participated in the Business Summit. The delegates emphasised the need for cooperation between government and the business sector in promoting economic development. Furthermore, the Business Summit acknowledged the importance of sustainable development, promoting economic and technical cooperation as well as networking by the private sector, the need for capacity building and promoting direct trade between Asia and Africa. **The Jakarta Joint Declaration on enhancing cooperation for progress between the Asian-African Business Community** was adopted at the end of the Business Summit.

The **World Renewable Energy Conference and Exhibition** provided a forum for engineers, policy makers, academia and the private sector to discuss issues relating to sources of renewable energy. Delegates from 11 countries and 2 sub regional organisations attended the Energy Conference. The Conference produced the following important results **Jakarta Declaration on the Establishment of a Community of Renewable Energy of Asia-Africa** and **The Community of Renewable Energy of Asia-Africa: Plan of Action for 2005-2015**.

A **Workshop on the role of Women and Youth** took place on 19 April 2005. The workshop recognised the pivotal role of women and youth in driving development. Recommendations were made on the promotion of the status and role of women and youth, as well as identifying concrete areas of concern that needed attention. These are outlined in the **Recommendation Adopted by the Asian-African Workshop on the Role of Women and Youth**.