A European Perspective on Higher Education Cooperation between Asia and Europe
ASEM crisis summit last week in Beijing

- World is interconnected
- Local responses alone are not working
- We need to work together more than ever
Forces for change in Higher Education

- Instability
  - Highly turbulent world economy
  - Financial instability
  - Migration
  - Demographic imbalance
  - Energy crisis
  - Depletion of natural resources
  - Global epidemics
  - Increased inequality
  - Exacerbated identities
  - Renewed religious and spiritual quests
  - Global trafficking
  - Terrorism

→ A more and more unpredictable and competitive world.
Forces for change in Higher Education

Globalization

- a borderless world of opportunities or the triumph of deregulation?
- cross-border education / McDonaldization of HE
- increasing prevalence of English/ Globish
- imperative for institutions to internationalize.

A Flat New World.
Forces for change in Higher Education

Technology

- expanding access (distance learning)
- reshaping teaching and pedagogy
- growing up in the worldwide web.
- writing, texting, “edutainment”
- unlimited access to knowledge resources
- the cyberspace hunters-gatherers (rip, mix & burn)
- Second Life – Long Learning?
Forces for change in Higher Education

- Technology
  - reaching new markets
  - driving organizational changes
  - « for profit » new providers and joint ventures
  - increasing competition
Forces for change in Higher Education

Competition

- Inter-institutional competition for students is driving improvement
- Competition from the corporate sphere
- Competition for academic staff, funding and prestige (ranking!)
Forces for change in Higher Education

Mobility

- Migratory flows
- Controversial research is geographically constrained
- Teachers / researchers are becoming nomads in search of hotspots
- University is less a stable and well defined community and becomes more an *ad hoc*, ever changing community of communicators and researchers.
Some key questions

- Will national governments lose their influence on HE?
- Will borderless education undermine HE’s capacity to contribute to social development and cultural identity?
- What about the Brain Drain?
None of us can relax in this « dog-eat-prof-world »
In Europe and in the world, the responses to those challenges have been:

- research partnerships
- educational alliances and cooperation
- internationalization of teaching and learning (studying abroad, languages skills)
In the European context, the Bologna process and the Lisbon strategy have been key engines of change.
Higher education in Europe:
Shifting responsibilities and contexts

- Higher Education remains predominantly a national responsibility
- Bologna process: An enlarged Europe (46 countries) looking for convergence through common structures and tools:
  - 3 years Bachelor + 2 years Master
  - European Credit Transfer System (ECTS)
  - Diploma Supplement
  - Quality assurance

Our common model with Bologna is a model of cooperation and solidarity
A UNIQUE CULTURE OF COLLABORATION

The ongoing changes in Europe are based on over a 30 year old practice of partnership and networking:

♦ **In teaching:** J.S.P., ERASMUS, TEMPUS, ALFA, ERASMUS MUNDUS,

♦ **In research:** PCRD, and now ERC, EIT, etc.

♦ **And at every level:**
  - Minister: Biannual conferences since 1999
  - Institution: CRE, EUA, EURASHE, Coimbra, UNICA, LERU, etc.
  - Student: ESU
Partnership and alliance are becoming key notions

- Universities can complement one another
- Universities can learn from one another
- Firms are increasingly dependent on external source of knowledge
- Increasing role of university networks in Europe.

FROM COMPETITION TO « COOPETITION »
The Global Agenda: Acting together on common challenge 
Europe-China Academics Workshop 2007 - Brussels

♦ To reinforce mutual academic cooperation as a counterbalance to the homogenizing impact of financial and industrial globalization.

♦ To improve facilities for, and reduce existing administrative and legal barriers to, student mobility with a view to expanding numbers and balancing students flows.

♦ To work together on reconciling the twin demands of academic freedom and social responsibility.
Europe's Universities: Commitment towards higher education Dialogue and Cooperation with Asia partners

Suggestions for global practices: avenues to explore together....
From Bologna to Eurasia - Stage 1

◊ 9 Years into the Bologna Process: Lessons learned

✓ Systems reform – convergence – institutional and national best practices
✓ Mobility of students, academics and administrators
✓ Model for government – university – student interaction
  – at institutional level: autonomy
  – at system level: Bologna Process
From Bologna to Eurasia - Stage 2

♦ Bologna: exchange and collaboration beyond Europe

✓ How to ensure mobility of people, flow of ideas between Europe and Asia?

✓ ‘System’ requirements: recognition, mutual understanding of quality assurance

✓ How to generate a model of interaction
  – among governments
  – among universities
  – among governments and universities at ASEM level
Inter-regional higher education dialogue - Stage 3

♦ Transatlantic Dialogue since 1989
  ✔ EUA and American Council on Education (ACE) and the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC)
  ✔ Higher education policy dialogue + sector, institutional development

♦ How can we achieve this with Asia?
  ✔ Facilitators, resources, etc.
  ✔ Partners
Enhance research and Education - Stage 4

EUA’s core mission: Strengthen European universities

- Institutional Development
- Autonomy and Accountability
- Good governance and Management
- Funding
- Research management, partnership and funding
EUA’s core mission: Strengthen European universities

- Enhance their social inclusiveness
- International standing and connectiveness
- Learning from and with international partners (Transatlantic Dialogue): Quality assurance, doctoral education, industry cooperation etc.
- Improve institutional cooperation beyond Europe

How do you see a similar university association working in Asia?
EUA, the voice of the European universities

• 34 national Rectors’ Conferences
• 770 individual universities
• in 46 European countries
Europe-Asia Higher Education on-going Dialogue and Cooperation

♦ September 2007 - Asia-Europe Colloquium on University Governance and Management, Kuala Lumpur
♦ May 2008 - ASEM Education Ministers Meeting – an milestone
♦ October 2008 - 1st ASEM Rectors’ Conference – an important step
♦ Need to build up a concerted, systematic and scheduled dialogue with clear benefits for the HEI and their constituencies – in particular students.
♦ Process can only be successful if stakeholders are actively involved
♦ ASEM Process: How to ensure that top down is matched and responded by bottom up?
♦ EUA ready to bring its experience
Conclusion: Actions required

- Improve mobility
  - Recognition and quality
  - Scholarship programmes
  - Language and multicultural skills
  - Remove administrative and legal obstacles

- Improve cooperation
  - Joint degrees
  - Doctoral education
  - Research on shared concerns
Conclusion: Actions required

♦ Improve dialogue
  ✓ EUA like partner for an ongoing inter-regional Higher Education dialogue
  ✓ Agenda and systematic follow-up

♦ Improve government involvement
  ✓ Policy dialogue
  ✓ funding and programmes

♦ Improve awareness
Conclusion: Common Goals

- Improve our teaching/learning capacities
- Improve our research capacities
Together, let us pave the way for a new silk road