

# Meeting of National Coordinators of ASEA-Uninet Greece, September 2001

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### Report of the Chairman

Opening forewords of Prof. Zandonini with thanks to the Greek Coordinator Prof. Hadjiliadis for the opportunity to meet in a country with such a long history and beautiful surroundings.

After the Phuket meeting and the news coming from the EU Commission about Asia Link and AUNP in March, Prof. Zandonini went to Brussels to meet Mr Haupt, responsible for both projects, who confirmed the complete willingness of the Commission to go on with this programme delayed only because of organizational problems.

The programme should start around the end of this year / beginning of 2002 with the first call. The network needs to be ready with practical proposals by the end of the year to present suitable projects by April 2002.

There will be a **help desk** to support these activities.

Some practical problems concerning visas for Asian people coming to Europe, arisen during the preparation of the Ioannina meeting have been solved thanks to the Schengen Visa for there are some procedures in some countries that speed up the process. This October Prof. Zandonini will be in Vietnam for the celebration of HUT's 45th Anniversary and he will also discuss these kinds of problems with the Embassy.

## Report of the European Coordinator

Prof. Rode as European Coordinator reports on the upcoming AUNP programme. He says that the President of AUN Prof. Supachai, former Chairman of Asea Uninet, has strong links with the Commission and might be of support in this matter.

To be effective it would be of help if National Coordinators work closely in their countries to establish stronger cooperation and implement the use of Asea Uninet opportunities.

Austrian Universities, in cooperation with Indonesia and The Philippines, are ready to offer EU students a one-month programme on Asian countries' culture and business from next year. Participants might be undergraduate (1 year before the Master), graduate, Ph.D. or University staff. The European partners should encourage the participation of 1-2 students each.

The cost is low (1500-1700 USD will cover travel, accommodation, meals and tuition) and there are scholarships to support some attendance.

An Austrian scholarship fund is available for S.E. Asian Ph.D. and post-doctorate candidates, partially financed by Industry, besides the usual fellowships offered by the Foreign Ministry ("North - South Dialogue"). Possible areas include Engineering, Sciences, Technology and Economics.

Asea Uninet National Coordinators might be called as Board Members to evaluate the new scholarship programme. At present the call involves Thailand, Indonesia and Vietnam, while as regards The Philippines who will join soon, they are going to plan how to define joint criteria.

National Coordinators should also push their Governments to examine the Asea Uninet programme and find ways to support activities.

### *Prof. Kusmayanto*

Since the Phuket meeting the Indonesian members are trying to identify links and topics to improve the network action and attract resources from the North since exchanges are not symmetric.

Possible topics are

- Tropical marine sciences
- Biodiversity
- Tropical medicine
- Environmental issues
- The role of women in sciences and technology

Prof. Zandonini remembers the constant interest on European and Asian Studies and Prof. Diokno recalls an interesting series of lectures on European Thinkers that might also be reversed on Asian Thinkers. Other specific topics are Buddhism, Poetry or similar subjects. They have interesting faculties of Music and Arts in The Philippines. In Austria Music and Arts courses are held regularly and in the past they had some on Thai culture, history and art.

Prof. Rode highlights the problem of communication amongst the "Area" network partners

that could be overcome in different ways. For instance notifying when an Asian Professor comes from his home country so that his presence may be optimized and costs reduced. Even Industry is very interested in any initiative coming from the Asian side.

### Report of the Asian Coordinator

Prof. Prasert Chitapong highlights how the initiatives with Europe are mainly U.K. or France-centred both for the linguistic and the social-economic policy involvement.

It could be differently oriented considering Europe as a whole. Possible topics proposed: Anthropology and Economic-Political Sciences.

Prof. Kusmayanto says that the real activities should focus on the existing Asian links. National Coordinators should start **a survey on focus areas** identifying actual reference persons and which kinds of cooperation are going on at present. As regards new curricula development (e.g. the use of IT), it is important to collect information mentioning practical problems faced in the past (and related solutions).

Prof. Rode proposes to collect this information in a document to be presented at the next plenary meeting. The **Chairman will prepare a form** to be proposed to the National Coordinators for approval and modifications then to be transmitted to the members of the network asking for a feedback by May 2002.

### Policy Guidelines

The geographical area covered by the network is widening; however, in Europe Germany is still missing.

At present there are no new requests of participation and since the network is focusing on streamlining and real cooperation, there is no need to expand too much.

There will be a soft check on Germany (Freiburg or other Universities).

As regards Asia: Laos and Cambodia will be invited as observers to the Plenary meeting. Hector Rifa has got some contacts with the Royal University of Phnom Penh and after an informal check will provide the address of the Rector. In his opinion they are open but interested in cooperation only if it really improves the University level.

A list of Policy guidelines is requested although main lines could be worked out from the plenary meeting reports.

### Membership Applications

- Germany (see above)
- Netherlands (the Groningen University will apply)
- Thailand 2 applications approved by the National Coordinators Committee:
  - NARESUAN University and

- THAMMASAT University
- Indonesia (SUMATERA UTARA, Medan, Sumatera Island - already present in Phuket- and University of HASANUDIN, Makasar, Sulawesi Island)

The application of the Hanoi Agricultural University cannot be handled since the National Coordinator for Vietnam is not present. Prof. Zandonini will explore some possibility during his visit to Hanoi.

### Information Exchange

Proposal to support the NET NOTICE BOARD and e-mail groups as means of communication and cooperation for the coordinators.

A **newsletter** with abstracts of relevant news and links to related web pages will be drafted and transmitted to the members.

### Asia Links and Other EU Programmes

As to the other EU programmes there are a number of activities 'asking' for common lobbying action, that can be funded by European programmes and give some support.

To widen cooperation as much as possible Universities should sort out areas and devoted programmes before applying, and share information on activities and - whenever possible - on successful projects.

Asea Uninet may apply with different groups of interest (defining the priorities of each group) or the network as a whole.

The assembly go through the document provided by Mr Haupt.

The Chairman will attend a meeting in Brussels as soon as the Asia Link call is out to find out which kind of projects have good chances to be approved.

In order to facilitate project identification an inventory of areas should be done by National Coordinators by the end of November.

Prof. Roderick says that also the representative of each country at the Commission may provide useful information.

About AUNP, at present the Chairman Prof. Supachai might provide support and information. Prof. Kusmayanto wonders if there might be some conflict of interests between AUN and Asea Uninet in presenting projects for EU funding Prof. Diokno specifies that the EU documentation does not specify that only AUN Universities can apply. Prof. Rode has already checked the matter and any project presented by Universities is eligible for funding (if it meets the other requirements). It is to be underlined that most of the member Universities of AUN are also members of Asea Uninet.

## Focus Areas

After summarizing what had already been said on focus areas the possibility of funding some of them under different EU programmes (e.g. European Studies programme...) is underlined.

Anyway the Database we are going to present for the Plenary meeting will be of help to develop proposals on Focus Areas.

## Proposals of Joint Programmes

The reciprocal recognition of studies and credits is essential to a development of joint programmes. Prof. Rode informs the Assembly that the Austrian Conference of Rectors recognizes the Degrees of the Asea Uninet Universities and Prof. Kusmayanto proposes some kind of reciprocal agreement on the use of ECTS. Although it is quite diffused in Europe, it is not the same in Asia. Working on this matter as a network can be easier.

The proposal is to establish a work group to identify and solve the problems of crediting within Asea Uninet..

With regards to the promotion of joint programmes arising from the interests of the member Universities, it is relevant to emphasize the impact of education on the economic and social life of the other geographical area.

Joint programmes could start in the form of sandwich programmes. It may also require the presence of European co-advisers in Asian Universities to improve European Studies programmes and vice versa.

Joint policy lines concerning both credit systems and funding systems should solve most of the practical problems.

As to other possibilities of funding under AUNP there is a special voice to fund "people that should meet to develop joint activities" that can also be used to finance the Coordinators' or the Plenary meeting.

## Plenary Meeting in 2002

It will be in Trento or surroundings.

There are different proposals regarding possible dates from mid-July to the end of August  
The presence of about 80 persons is expected.

Possible dates to investigate are 9-11 July; **16-18 July**, or 27-29 August.

The University of Trento will take care of the meeting and will try to involve the University of Verona as well.

## Activities to be performed

As decided in the National Coordinators Meeting,

National Coordinators should

- work closely in their countries to establish stronger cooperation and implement the use of Asea Uninet opportunities,
- push their Governments to examine the Asea Uninet programme and find out some way to support it,
- start a survey on focus areas identifying actual reference persons and which kinds of cooperation are going on at present,
- notify the presence of visiting Asian Professors in Europe and vice versa to optimize their visits,
- share information mentioning practical problems faced in the past (and related solutions),
- join the NET NOTICE BOARD and e-mail groups as a means of communication and cooperation.

#### The Chairman will

- prepare a form for a survey on existing links, to be proposed to the National Coordinators for approval and modifications then to be transmitted to the members of the network asking for a feedback by May 2002,
- prepare a Database on Focus Areas and existing areas of cooperation for the plenary meeting,
- define the activities for the plenary meeting.

#### Other activities to be performed

- check the possibility to prepare a newsletter with abstracts of relevant news and links to related web pages will be drafted and transmitted to the members.
- there will be a soft check on Germany (Freiburg or other Universities).
- Explore the possibility of establishing a work group to define and solve the problems of crediting within Asea Uninet

# List of Participants and their Addresses

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- Europe
- Southeast-Asia

## **EUROPE**

### **AUSTRIA**

Prof. Dr. DDDr. h. c. B. M. Rode  
Universität Innsbruck  
Institut für Allgemeine, Anorganische und Theoretische Chemie  
Innrain 52a  
A-6020 Innsbruck  
Tel.: +43 512 507 5160  
Fax: +43 512 507 2714  
e-mail: [asea-uninet@uibk.ac.at](mailto:asea-uninet@uibk.ac.at)

### **DENMARK**

Prof.Dr.Roderick V.N.Melnik  
Mathematical Modelling Group  
University of Southern Denmark  
Faculty of Science and Engineering  
Mads Clausen Institute,  
DK 6400 Sonderborg  
Tel. +45 6550 1681  
Fax: +45 6550 1660  
e-mail: [rmelnik@mci.sdu.dk](mailto:rmelnik@mci.sdu.dk)

### **FINLAND**

Dr. Simo Vesterinen  
Lecturer, International Coordinator  
Tampere Polytechnic Business School  
SI-Tampere  
Tel.: +358 3 2647 861  
Fax: +358 3 2647 866  
e-mail: [simo.vesterinen@cs.tpu.fi](mailto:simo.vesterinen@cs.tpu.fi)

### **GREECE**

Prof. Dr. Nick Hadjiliadis  
Department of Chemistry  
University of Ioannina  
Gr-Ioannina 45110  
Tel.: +30 651 98420

Fax: +30 651 44831  
e-mail: [nhadjil@cc.uoi.gr](mailto:nhadjil@cc.uoi.gr)

### ***ITALY***

Prof.Dr.Ing. Riccardo Zandonini  
Pro-Rector and Delegate for International Relations  
University of Trento  
Via Belenzani, 12  
I-38100 Trento  
Tel.: +39 0461-882901  
Fax: +39 0461-881270  
E-mail: [riccardo.zandonini@ing.unitn.it](mailto:riccardo.zandonini@ing.unitn.it)

### ***NETHERLANDS***

Drs. Marrik Bellen  
Programme Manager Southeast Asia  
Utrecht University  
NL-3508-TC Utrecht  
Tel. +31 30 253 2696  
Fax: +31 30 253 7550  
E-mail: [m.bellen@bb.usc.uu.nl](mailto:m.bellen@bb.usc.uu.nl)

### ***SPAIN***

Associate Prof. Dr. Hector Rifa  
University of Oviedo  
E-Oviedo  
Tel.: +34 98 5103280  
Fax: +34 98 5104144  
e-mail: [rifa@correo.uniovi.es](mailto:rifa@correo.uniovi.es)

### ***SWEDEN***

Assist. Prof. Dr. Sören Eriksson  
Jönköping International Business School  
S-Jönköping  
Tel.: +46 36 157512  
Fax: +46 36 121832  
e-mail: [soren.eriksson@jibs.hj.se](mailto:soren.eriksson@jibs.hj.se)

### ***SOUTH-EAST ASIA***

#### ***INDONESIA***

Prof. Dr. Kusmayanto Kadiman,  
Institute of Technology Bandung  
Jalan Tamansari 64  
Bandung 40116, Indonesia



Tel.: +62 22 4231 792, 0062 22 2511 124, 2511 205 11104  
Fax: +62 22 4231 792  
e-mail: [kkadiman@tf.itb.ac.id](mailto:kkadiman@tf.itb.ac.id)

### *PHILIPPINES*

Dr. Marina Serena I. Diokno  
Vice-President for Academic Affairs  
University of the Philippines  
Quezon City, Philippines  
Tel.: +632-926-4736  
Fax.: +632-436-7535 / 928-2888  
e-mail: [ovpaa@up.edu.ph](mailto:ovpaa@up.edu.ph)

### *THAILAND*

Assoc.Prof.Dr.Prasert Chitapong  
President  
Prince-of-Songkla University, Hat Yai  
Office of the President  
P.O.Box 102  
Hat Yai Songkla 90110, Thailand  
Tel. +66 74 211 030  
Fax: +66 74 212 828  
e-mail: [cprasert@ratree.psu.ac.th](mailto:cprasert@ratree.psu.ac.th)