COSMOVISIONS CONNECTED

REPORT OF THE 2ND EAST-WEST DIALOGUE
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What, why and for what of the East-West Dialogue?

In the era of the information society revolution with all its implications, we live in an international system in transformation in its what, who and how; where the emergence of identity contends with the emergence of new paradigms for global governability and governance as the new axis around which the system is structured. Culture, civilization, is configured as the social uterus that moulds collective identities, the “us” as opposed to “the other”, “the others” as well as the global “us”, the “us” we all form part of. We live in a World where Orientalisms and Occidentalisms coexist, with their potential consequences, side by side with the discourse of alleged Western universality and the proclamation and affirmation of “Asian values”. And although the culture of “us” as opposed to “the others” has for many years enabled human communities to advance and navigate throughout History, the globalization of the information society means that, whether we like it or not, we are all aboard the same spaceship Earth destination future in a single, global society in which everything is related, where the only survival possible is no longer that of “us” as opposed to “the others”, but of the “us” of which we all form part. What stands for, in front of the inertia of the cultures of the “us” as opposed to “the others”, a challenge of construction - not to substitute or exclude, but as a necessary complement for and through which to realize our multiple yet unique identities, while comprehending the other and building with him or her the culture of the global “us” - of dialogue and understanding about the core ideas on which to base, in terms of what and how, the navigability and navigation of the spaceship Earth destination future, from which to build global governance and chart out the route for the preservation of global public assets, so that History can still be that of continuity and adaptation of life and human kind on Earth.

As stated on the occasion of the first East-West Dialogue, dialogue among civilizations is configured above all as a perspective and attitude potentially present in the vision and action of all or any international actor. Of the relativity of one’s own vision or truth. Of awareness of the others. Of their existence and their visions and truths. Wish to understand the others, to listen to them, to explain to them, explain
ourselves, us and the world (our “us” and our world), to talk to them. To dialogue. A perspective/attitude which is introducible and should be introduced in forums, international organizations, agendas, bilateral or direct relations or meetings between all international players, from governments to the international and national public opinion makers.

A perspective/attitude indispensable and irreplaceable in order to manage what identity signifies in a dynamic of cooperation in the international system. But not unique; since dialogue among civilizations may also be the object or the result of the creation of specific institutions, tools, mechanisms or forums, with the twofold value of the actions or dialogue they lead to and their demonstration effect, as well as reference and transmission beyond that perspective/attitude.

It may be, and fortunately has been and is, as, among others, through the East-West Dialogue, object of this Report. East-West Dialogue born within the framework of the Universal Forum of Cultures Barcelona 2004, organized by Casa Asia¹ (Asia House) with the collaboration of the Universal Forum of Cultures Foundation, UNESCO, ASEF (Asia Europe Foundation) and the Club of Madrid.

Dialogue as meeting and encounter place. Between East and West, notions that are both geographical and cultural or civilizational; of oneself and of the other, Weltanschaung or visions through which to approach the world’s major issues and develop one’s own approaches. Constructive dialogue, focused on the search for coincidences rather than differences. Forum of representative personalities - but not of representatives - with autoritas and the ability to contribute – because of their political or intellectual ideas, action or expertise - to the reflection on relations between the East and the West. Not for negotiating and decision-making; but for the exchange and germination of ideas and reflections, with the goal of influencing people’s understanding and perceptions, of determining the reality of East-West relations and their development. Of dialogue, for dialogue and through dialogue, created with a vocation of permanence in time through its annual meeting in Barcelona.

Path to be followed from the development and outcome of the first edition and in light of the most important events that have taken place at the international stage, particularly the attempt to build the a global agenda promoted at the UN World Summit in September 2005, especially on United Nations reform and the Millennium Development Goals, on which the Sachs Report constitutes the necessary reference point for analysis and proposal. Also of special significance was the proposal for an

¹ To know about Casa Asia, please see www.casaasia.org
Alliance of Civilizations put forward by the Prime Ministers of Spain and Turkey and adopted by the UN Secretary General, who appointed a High Level Group to formulate recommendations and proposals for action to transform the reality.

This vocation and challenge to produce thought for action, to promote thereby changes in paradigms and perceptions with potential for contributing towards the transformation of reality is also present in the principles and vocation of the East-West Dialogue, which places the Alliance of Civilizations on its agenda and aspires to contribute towards the process of reflection and proposal in which it is immersed.

Whereas the agenda of the first edition of East-West Dialogue proposed an initial approach, through six roundtables, to the major issues around which exchange between Eastern and Western perspectives could be implemented or become relevant (East-West dialogue: past, present and future; East and West and the transformation of the international system; ethics and globalization; culture, development and socioeconomic models, through a compared vision of Asia and Latin America; dialogue between reason and spirit; and dialogue and creativity in art, science and culture), the second edition is structured around two general roundtables (one for diagnosis and conceptualization of global problems, and the other with the operative vocation of formulating proposals for action) and two roundtables on more specific topics. This makes up an itinerary in four stages that will lead us to consider East and West as a bridge to peace, development, democracy, diversity and tolerance, key ideas - in substance and attitude - to understand and jointly build a common future; the proposal of the Alliance of Civilizations and its perspectives; racism and xenophobia; and democracy as a meeting point.

Beyond the “what”, the substance of the dialogue, in its “who” the presence of renowned participants\(^2\) from East Asia and Latin America - a circumstance that contrasts with the tendency to identify the West with the Anglo-Saxon world and the East with the Islamic Arab world – is to be pointed out.

Central issues raised as questions to be answered through dialogue, object of this report which responds to the twofold majestic and structuring ambition of focusing and formulation – of the questions or theme of each roundtable, indicated below in italics - and ensuing a synthesis of what was raised with the purpose of distilling core ideas, proposals and reflections to provide an overall vision and approximation to possible answers to the questions posed, as well as to facilitate subsequent reflection and continuance of the Dialogue. A report, on the other hand,

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\(^{2}\) See the program of the II East-West Dialogue included in this publication.
which does not pretend to reflect consensuses or literal reproductions of what was said by participants, being its content the responsibility of this Rapporteur.3

**Initial considerations**

If we wonder about the lessons to be learned from the Asia-Pacific experience in terms of the interrelationship between peace, culture and development, we will see that development and the region’s emergence and economic growth are just an iceberg’s tip founded on peace in the area, tolerance as acceptance of the differences between the political systems, and the absence of major religious conflict. Looking towards the future, the region faces politically the challenge of avoiding the resort to nationalism as the way to political mobilization and the hegemonism of the major regional powers, and that of building and consolidating a multilateral model of interregional relations; and, culturally, the challenge of preserving cultural and social identities and accepting diversity, while becoming integrated in the global culture, as new shared culture all can share and share.

East-West Dialogue cannot but consider global terrorism as one of the central issues on its agenda, strategic goal of the Alliance of Civilizations to be faced through common social values and policies.

Islam in itself is an inclusive, tolerant faith. However, a decentralized jihadist network with a zero-sum game approach has been developed, very different from the true, fundamental approach of Islam. What raises the challenge of ensuring that the non-Moslem world does not end up as the extremists would like it does.

Singapore’s experience and approach of peaceful coexistence of its cultural, civilizational and religious circles in a common space of citizenship, compatible with identity, is of particular interest, to a large extent the result of appropriate educational (public schools) and housing policies, whereby individuals and families from different communities live in peace with a common citizenship.

**East and West: a bridge to peace, development, democracy, diversity and tolerance**

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3 Italics will be used throughout this report to reflect the proposals or questions around which each roundtable or thematic area is structured, as formulated by the Rapporteur in his initial presentation, and non-italics will be used to synthesize the contributions of the participants and the matters discussed in the Dialogue.
Beyond the visions and values of each civilization or culture, of the “us” of each of them, of the “us” we all form part of, the challenge of confronting the common problems of the planet’s viability and global governance, of developing shared ideas and values with which to chart our voyage to the future. To dialogue on the common and differing points of civilizational perspectives, to look for a common diagnosis of global problems, to formulate converging visions of peace, development and democracy as central ideas on which to build the future. Of making diversity and tolerance common values and principles on that purpose. Of answering or tackling questions such as:

- Is culture or civilization what marks the differences in concepts? A consideration of interrelations.
- Identification of common ideas and elements for contributing towards a global roadmap or navigation chart.

- **Democracy**
  - What? Beyond polyarchy: concepts and conditions for democracy.
    - Electoral democracy. Democracy and the rules of the political game.
    - Social democracy. Redistribution, development and democracy.
    - Citizen democracy and rule of Law.
  - Where?
    - Local
    - National
    - Regional
    - Global
    - Cosmopolitan democracy and new global order?

- **Development**
  - Where? International relations and global development. Development of some = underdevelopment of the others?
  - How?

- **Peace**
  - What? From negative peace to positive peace.
    - Peace and resolution of conflicts. New wars and new peaces.
    - Peace = development.
    - Peace = culture of peace and cooperation among civilizations.
  - Where? The local and global dimensions of peace.
  - How?
• Cultural diversity and tolerance: global values and principles?
  o Of cultural diversity and its implications.
  o Culture and peace, democracy and development.
  o Universal values vs. cultural values?
  o The age of tolerance?

The disappearance of the East-West tension which structured the Cold War international system as well as globalization developed by the information society have brought, on one side, about the emergence of new lines of fracture in the international system, such as North-South tension or differentiation, or the logics of civilization differences between East and West, leading to the cultural construction of Orientalisms and Occidentalisms, builders of the image of others, of the other self, of the frontier with others, and simplifiers of the differences in each one’s inner self. They have also, on the other, given rise to the unique opportunity of organizing the international system around a common agenda facing the problems of common viability, navigation chart for the great universal Umma – in Shireen Hunter’s expression – of the “us” we all form part of.

What?. It raises the need and challenge to build, all together, a common culture, common navigation rules and communication codes compatible with cultural diversity, precisely in the interests of cultural diversity and of the development of one’s own identity as an essential, shared requirement of human beings, the interest in sharing common clear rules and objectives.

How? Through multilateralism, a multilateralism that combines the need for consensus and negotiation, for drawing up, all together, the rules to which we are all subject and with which we must all comply, with the necessary enforcement capabilities to guarantee they are complied with. A multilateralism, too, under which the emerging powers can and will feel comfortable.

Through dialogue as a tool for ensuring no one stands above another, for learning how to put oneself in the place, in the shoes, of the other, for understanding and apprehending the other, based on and conducive to the generation of tolerance and diversity as values and core ideas. And tolerance cannot grow if rooted in ignorance, but which needs to be based on awareness of the others, for what education is configured as an essential tool and factor.
Through development. Action and cooperation for it, coherence in its approach as a shared adventure and objective, becomes both a privileged space where to build the new system and a decisive test of its credibility.

Through institutions that make mutual awareness and cultural relations possible for reciprocal understanding and peace building, of whom the Japan Foundation constitutes an example and reference.

Looking towards the future, the question is raised on which elements can form part of the common and decisive elements for moulding the global culture and system. These should include separation between religion and politics, between the Church and the State, with the corresponding adaptations and models of application in accordance with national specificities (as illustrated by the Indonesian approach and experience); women’s empowerment and autononomy; human rights; and a broader conception of security that indivisibly relates human rights with development, such as that put forth in the report of the High Level Group appointed by the UN Secretary General to reform the United Nations. The challenge, in brief, of new paradigms and shared core ideas, of producing thought for action, as recommended by the Alliance of Civilizations.

**Dialogue among civilizations, cultures and peoples. Towards the Alliance of Civilizations.**

How can ideas be transferred from paper to reality? How to go from thought to action? How can one avoid, reconstruct and overcome Orientalisms and Occidentalisms? What policies, programmes and actions are needed for mutual comprehension, understanding between cultures and of culture? What policies do we need in order to structure a global navigation chart based on peace, democracy and development? Suggestions for the Alliance of Civilizations, sponsored by the United Nations in response to an initiative of Spain and Turkey, in the political, economic, social and cultural spheres.

In light of the experience of dialogue among civilizations and cultures promoted by UNESCO since the 1960s, 9-11 is the turning point after which there has been a qualitative leap in terms of its importance in the international system, entering the agendas, UNESCO being urged by its Member States demands to seek the common values of humanity, to obtain from it results beyond mere declarations, not limited strictly to culture, but extended to all other fields: education, science and
technology, cultural diversity and information and communication technologies. A great collective effort of dialogue at the grassroots level has led to specific recommendations and a global consensus on the universal shared values present in and common to the different cultures and civilizations, and which could be moulded to form a basis on which to establish behavioural standards or benchmarks, as well as the affirmation of the fundamental value of tolerance. Looking towards the future, three areas can be discerned as scenarios for fundamental challenges: interfaith dialogue; dialogue among and concerning women; and cultural diversity, which the Convention on cultural diversity, currently being elaborated at UNESCO, is going to introduce in International Law, what, besides its intrinsic value, strengthens the conditions for its practice and development.

There is a close and positively feedback relationship between dialogue among civilizations and multilateralism. Since dialogue does not take place in a vacuum, but from mutual understanding; in the cultural, political and social reality. A reality in which development and prosperity promote and facilitate tolerance, and the respect for and defence of the environment can also promote and facilitate peace. Multilateralism poses the need for and the challenge of democracy in the international system, which facilitates and positively interrelates with democracy on the national scale; as well as the need for and the challenge of a transformation of the international agenda and differences resolving mechanisms.

If cultural frontiers are overimposed and replace geographic frontiers, if cultural constructions with respect to the “us” and the “others” lead to dynamics of confrontation that feed each other, cultural and identity factors may lead, in such development, to a problem of collective security that would need to be tackled collectively, multilaterally in the United nations, the forum and global organization par excellence. Such approach leads to the Alliance of Civilizations adopted by the UN Secretary General at the proposal of the Prime Ministers of Spain and Turkey, giving place to the constitution of a High Level Group oriented towards identifying common interests from which to define common policies in different areas relevant for mutual understanding – such as education, the mass media, the fight against terrorism and racism, international cooperation for human rights, and good governance - which would be reflected in an action plan to be used as a common navigation chart. Common and shared with others, but at the same time a test of coherence for oneself, of putting into practice within oneself what one proposes towards others, and of credibly passing certain tests that determine the credibility of the commitment – including, particularly in the case of Spain and the European Union, the entrance of Turkey to the EU and structuring a special relationship with Morocco that gives decisive backing to its feasibility and development.
They are, all three, interrelated, complementary and convergent initiatives which reinforce each other and feedback positively, confirming all of them education and the media as decisive areas for building cultural peace and cooperation among cultures and civilizations.

*Racism and Xenophobia: Confronting realities in Asia and Europe*

On the construction of the differentiation of “the other”, of his “otherness”, his affirmation as a different species from one’s own, with whom it is impossible to share and form an “us”. What, how and why of racism and xenophobia, apparent and latent. How can we reconstruct and fight them? How to promote the feeling of belonging to the human kind with all its consequences, of common human rights and cosmopolitan citizenship? How, particularly, to improve the situation of women an avoid it becoming the true “clash of civilizations”?

Questions of particular relevance and interest on the global agenda and at this juncture, from of the discussions we may consider, as necessary point of departure, racism as a political concept, rather than descriptive, with regulatory connotations, result of the transgression of the fine line separating nationalism from racism, which governments tend to think they can control but which ends up being perceived as something “natural”. In front of the old racism based on biological features, the new one based on cultural factors. Racism and xenophobia are built on fear and on the essential need for identity. Resistance, cultural retreat or democracy become possible answers to them, which require overcoming internalized hatred. Possible answers may also be found in religion, as show for example, through Buddhist identification with suffering or the Confucian mandate to love your family and all humanity. They are a phenomenon that is particularly manifested with respect to foreigners and minorities.

Religious intolerance is also a source of confrontation and of threat to peace. Overcoming it is a challenge for East-West dialogue, and also a challenge within each religion, each *vis-à-vis* the others, and from secularity. As shown by the Christianophobia present in the midst of Christianity itself, in certain versions or interpretations of secularity, and in Islamic societies.

Different answers to racism, xenophobia and religious intolerance have been sought. Mutual awareness and the Law are, in any case, fundamental tools in that
regard. In Europe, such solutions have basically followed the French model of citizenship and the Anglo-Saxon multicultural model of plurality of communities, each with its own cultures and traditions. However, as the case of Bosnia shows, separating communities may lead to a deficit of national construction. Looking towards the future stands the challenge to overcome it by synthesizing a model that promotes convergence towards multiculturalism from and within shared citizenship.

A compared approach to responses and reactions in Asia and Europe reveals that they vary at both the local and national levels in terms of recognition as well as reactions and policies. Despite this diversity, which certain common elements may be pointed out. While Europe has a common legal framework which Asia is lacking, migration stands in both areas for a challenge, and with it that to prevent xenophobia, racism and religious intolerance. What requires dialogue, awareness and exchange of experiences and policies, as well as opinion leaders aware of the situation and committed to it. It also requires society and its actors to fulfil their key, irreplaceable roles for understanding between ethnic groups. For knowledge frequently absent in academic spheres, for implementation of early-warning systems by social actors and organizations, for watchdog monitoring of governments and media.

If well handled, interfaith dialogue can help overcome intolerance, racism and xenophobia. Dialogue which may be carried out at a threefold level: that of the leaders, with the potential of producing messages to its followers and citizens; the theological dialogue, with its potential of favouring comprehension and clarification; and dialogue at the grassroots level, with its potential social influence, illustrated by different successful experiences. In Europe, such dialogue presents the particularity of the legitimacy of secular options; and the risk that self-criticism may enhance people’s feeling of guilt and avoid propositive attitudes.

Interfaith dialogue faces the challenge of constituting itself as multisectoral dialogue, not only among religions and religious, but among politicians, opinion leaders and creators of social dynamics as well.

It was seen from the discussions that some conclusions were shared on diagnosis and proposal. Diagnosis, first, of the multiplicity of identities and the problem of people’s refusal to accept them, to accept their multiplicity. That you are unable to see the world as it is, but as you are. That racism, xenophobia and intolerance have economic and political causes, over which religious and racial factors are imposed and acquire their own dynamics.
Proposals on education and monitoring of the media as essential factors and tools for overcoming them. Strengthening and extension of education has in itself had the effect of avoiding and mitigating racism, xenophobia and intolerance in any society. Text books, particularly History books, constitute decisive tools for this purpose, and their joint revision or drafting by several national or cultural communities is a step toward transforming them from a source of enmity to a source of peaceful coexistence. Monitoring the media, fundamentally by civil society, is a tool and guarantee by means of which to curb and fight racism, xenophobia and intolerance, and should be encouraged and supported from and by public powers.

Democracy as a meeting point. Regional tools and mechanisms.

If governance of contemporary human societies takes place at the fourfold local, national, regional and global levels; if we understand democracy to be the effective participation of citizens in decisions and policies that affect them in the different spheres of their social and personal lives, the realization of their authonomy and freedom with respect to their bodies, their wellbeing, their culture and identity, their association, the economy, the organization of violence and coercive relations, or regulatory and legal institutions… how can we make of democracy the effective system of government of human societies? How can we build it, not only at the level of the State and sub-state and local levels, but also on the regional and global ones? Are the organizations of regional integration and shared sovereignty - in some cases with suprastate features - the new spaces where to build democracy, and should they therefore be granted the legitimacy they need, together with efficacy, for their viability and consolidation? Is this a first step towards democratizing the system of global governance? What lessons can be learnt from the European construction process? What are the relationships between civilizations, culture and democracy? How to face from them the construction of democracy and make of democracy the meeting point and pillar on which to build among all the future for all?

What is the relative position of democracy on the global agenda? Is it a point of intersection between the different perspectives, problems and dynamics? Seized by dynamics of identity, the emergence of a global culture or civilization may still appear diffuse, but ten questions of the global agenda can be pointed out which, through dialogue, may lead us to the understandings and consensuses on which to build democracy:
Religion. Contrary to what it may seem, religion has not disappeared from the historically Christian secular societies. It is imbued or introjected in their cultural paradigms and visions of the world. The secularity of these societies should therefore not lead them to elude dialogue on religion, which is too important to be left exclusively in the hands of the religious.

- Tension in societies between modernity and tradition.
- The relationship between globalization and cultural specificity.
- The imbalances and inequalities of development and economic factors.
- The legacy of the past and the vision of it, frequently built as affirmation or fight against “the other”, to be overcome through education and, especially, by revising the text books.
- The need to confront the still pending problems of decolonization.
- The mass media: the need and challenge to dismantle in all aspects the demonization or sacralization of the other. Internet and its regulation and control.
- Minorities and the shaping and implementation of inclusive and marginalizing minorities policies.
- Multilateralism as a formula for global governance and the necessary reform of the United Nations system towards greater levels of democracy and universality.
- Democracy, as necessary consequence as well as condition. Since any dialogue lacks any sense if it is not held between the free, if it is not dialogue in freedom. Democracy as respect for the values of human dignity, for the universal rights of all, as their institutionalization.

Democracy, whose political principles are subscribed by Islam. Democracy not to be questioned, as some interested parties do, in the name of alleged cultural specificities, since it would mean accepting different levels of humanity. Democracy as participation, responsibility and accountability, the State ruled by law.

Democracy, which should not be taken for granted, whose effectiveness and consolidation is attracted by push factors and pull factors. Cultural reforms and transformations, the reduction of poverty, armed conflict resolution, transitional justice and the reform and transformation of the armed forces are factors that favour, promote or push towards democracy. The European Union and the perspective of adhesion to or relations with the EU, forums such as the OSCE, the Barcelona Process and the Broader Middle East and North Africa initiative, the Millennium Development Goals as a collective objective or global navigation chart, and the recently created UN Democracy Fund are all factors and tools that pull towards
democracy and through which to take up the challenge of achieving, beyond discourse, a real impact on the way to democracy.

Democracy, for whose construction not only are indispensable the States and governments, or the formal actors of the political systems, but NGOs, the relevant actors of civil society, the citizens as a whole who aspire to be such as well. Democracy, finally, as the universal aspiration of all actors concerned.

Democracy with different situations and challenges in every region. If look at Latin America, we cannot help remembering - together with the 9-11 air crashes on the twin towers in New York, watershed in the international system evolution and of the perception of threats to democracy - that other 11 September 2001, when the OAS Inter-American Democratic Charter was signed in Lima, in the hope of also becoming a watershed, after which self-coups or attacks on democracy (such as the one Lima underwent in 1992) would no longer be possible. With the aim to stop the pendulum between democracy and autocracy – militarism and subversion lying in wait – that has characterized the History of Latin America, and that of making democracy not only a form and procedure for exercising political rights, but also for providing societies with conditions of human dignity and equal opportunities. A Charter which states the right of American peoples to democracy, protected as such by jurisdictional mechanisms as other fundamental rights; which understands democracy not only as electoral democracy or a political system with fair, competitive elections, but also as effective practice of human rights and ruled of Law, reduction of poverty and inequalities, development with equity, satisfaction of social rights, transparency, respect for the institutions, their operativeness and reinforcement, and effectiveness of political parties as structures of intermediation. Not only electoral and political democracy – as conceptualized in UNDP’s Report on Democracy in Latin America -, but also citizen and social democracy, human development. A Charter by means of which the OAS Member States commit themselves, through its democracy clause, to intervene collectively in defence of democracy in any situation constituting a threat to it. A Charter, in brief, that illustrates regional consensus in its approach to democracy, its problems and conception in Latin America, both an asset and a reference; and which raises the challenge of passing from thought to action, from paper to reality. A journey, as shown by event after the Charter’s approval, still a long way to go.

Looking to Europe, backwards and forward, democracy appears as a meeting point towards which people and peoples converge from very different horizons, as an outcome of the Helsinki Act and the OSCE, the process of European construction and the attraction it exerts, the Copenhagen criteria and the European Union as the
goal on the horizon. After the fall of the Berlin wall, Eastern Europe has gone from reconquered freedom to insecurity, and from insecurity to democracy. A journey possible because there is a light at the end of the tunnel, a project for the future embodied in the dream and dreams of the people and peoples, to overcome the insecurity of the present and to fulfil the people’s aspirations to become the subject rather than the object of their History. And if this meeting point in Europe can be that of that European Union based on social coherence and the philosophy of internal solidarity and community of Law that inspires it, the challenge of defining a further project and common horizon towards which to progress, through which global challenges such as migration and terrorism can be confronted and for the construction of which democracy and tolerance are the necessary paradigms and reference points, is also faced. Democracy, which builds citizen’s consciousness, without what a people may resort to populism to seek refuge and security in situations of uncertainty and danger. Tolerance from the sincere desire not to exclude or damage the uniqueness of the World, based on the cosmic law of diversity as great human asset, on rejecting the idea that anyone can be arrogant enough as to set himself up as the owner of the absolute truth and wellbeing of the World. Tolerance which in turn requires democracy as meeting point.

We do not see in Asia neither a community of democracies, nor a democratic charter or common reference, nor the common way towards a collective project for which democracy is the meeting point; but a plurality and diversity of States and political systems, with different priorities, objectives and emphasis, from open democracies to Communist Party regimes, as well as systems with strong social or military control or failed or precarious States. However, their aspirations of freedom from certain undesirable situations, from attempts at oppression, from poverty and its chains, from war, are no different from those of other regions, in a region which, as others, also seeks peace. It cannot be overlooked, however, that there are, within the diversity, certain fundamental consensuses on development through market economy (as shown by the spectacular experience of China), peace keeping and settling differences through political means, evolving towards high degrees of openness, tolerance and acceptance of others and their diversity. In front of them, nationalism and hegemonic temptations appear as potential threats to the stability, peace and development achieved. In accordance with the thesis that there have been no wars between democracies, democracy and evolution towards democracy appear as the answer and the tool to prevent and avoid them, and the position of actors such as the EU and the UN human rights human rights constitute pull factors towards such evolution in a region where human welfare and the human being appear as essential priority, basis for a shared human security vision for the region.
**Final considerations**

Much, maybe all, had already been said. But that does not detract the value of having said it again, of verifying that, in all our diversity, our hues, there is much more that unites us than separates us. Dialogue comes from and presupposes is listening. Listening presupposes the “the other”, as well as oneself. Challenge, in Federico Mayor Zaragoza’s words, to go from the silence of the silenced to the silence of the silent. To avoid perceiving opposed concepts such as the West and Islam. Not to forget that dialogue is a path, a tool, and not a goal. Only possible from tolerance. That utopia has often been in History an idea or dream that has later become normality. For the first time in history, we know that human kind may destroy itself, and we are forced to meet the challenge and common senses of establishing limits, global navigation charts and codes from which jointly face the future of the “us” we all belong to.

Such is the ultimate sense of this report: that of remembering and reporting the ideas of men and women who came from East and West to share some sunny days November 2005 in Barcelona, memory - “present of the past” in María Zambrano’s words – with vocation to be transformed into hope - “present of the future” -, to contribute to other dialogues, inner and outer, to be the object of other listenings, of other lectures, in other places, other days. Message or letter in a bottle thrown into the sea – or a computer archive surfing the stormy waves of the web – with in the hope of being found on many islands, on many shores, by many people, that you read it.

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