



### **Gattaz: We should better connect Asia and Europe, based on rules**

*(Brussels, 18 October 2018)*

Today, business and government leaders from Asia and Europe gathered in Brussels to participate in the 16th Asia-Europe Business Forum and published conclusions on deepening and expanding the Asia-Europe relationship. The meeting was organised by BusinessEurope and held in the margins of the ASEM Summit.

**Pierre Gattaz, President of BusinessEurope said:**

“Europe and Asia want to intensify their economic cooperation and they agree that open and rules-based trade is a key priority for both regions. This is a very important signal from today’s meeting. Respecting market rules, transparency, open procurement and a level playing field for all companies is the basis to better connect Europe and Asia. Together with ambitious trade and investment agreements it will intensify our business relations and it will be prosperous for both regions and their citizens.”

Connectivity is a key priority in current EU-Asia relations. Many initiatives are currently underway, including projects of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), the European Fund for Strategic Investment (EFSI), the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) and the European Investment Bank. Several countries have launched their own connectivity strategies, including China, Japan, India, and ASEAN. The Asian Development Bank estimates that Asia’s infrastructure demand will exceed US \$1.7 trillion per year. In September 2018, the EU published its own strategy on how to better connect Europe and Asia, to enable sustainable, comprehensive and rules-based connectivity. The EU’s own fund for strategic investments launched in 2015 has thus far triggered 344 billion euros in additional investment that have benefited around 787.000 SMEs.

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