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# ASEM: Building Cooperation and Partnerships between Asia and Europe



**Presentation by Catherine Raper, First Assistant Secretary,  
Europe and Latin America Division, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade**

**TUESDAY 19 February**  
12:30pm - 2pm

**RMIT, CITY CAMPUS**  
Council Chamber Building 1,  
Level 2R 124  
La Trobe Street  
Melbourne VIC 3000

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Social and Global Studies Centre

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<https://asia-europe.eventbrite.com.au>

Australia's 2017 Foreign Policy White Paper noted that powerful drivers of change are converging in a way that is re-shaping the international order and challenging Australian interests. Multilateral forums are a crucial contributor to resilience in the international system, facilitating cooperation, understanding and setting communal rules and norms. They support the rule of law, economic empowerment and protection and promotion of universal rights and freedoms.

The Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) is one such forum that seeks to bring the vast continents of Asia and Europe closer together through dialogue and cooperation. ASEM works to strengthen relationships, cohesion and trust between its members. It provides a bridge between the significant European and ASEAN-centred regional architecture, enabling members to build trust and confidence in one another through mutual understanding. In a world of accelerating change, ASEM provides a common ground for members with diverse forms of government and different levels of development to identify shared interests and objectives. Australia has been a member of ASEM since 2010.

**Australia's ASEM Senior Official Catherine Raper will talk about how Australia is seeking to use this forum to broaden ties and pursue our foreign and trade policy priorities.**

**Catherine Raper** is First Assistant Secretary, Europe and Latin America Division. She is a senior career officer in Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) with over 25 years' experience. In her current position, Ms Raper is responsible for promoting and protecting Australia's prosperity, security and values through DFAT's engagement with Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean.

Previously, Ms Raper served as Australian Representative (Head of Post) in Taipei, Taiwan from 2014-2017. Her overseas experience has also included Minister-Counsellor (Trade) in the Australian Embassy in Washington DC (2010-2012), Counsellor to Australia's Permanent Mission to the WTO in Geneva (2003-2006) (working principally on WTO dispute settlement) and Third Secretary in the Australian Embassy in The Hague (1995-1998).

In Canberra, Ms Raper's previous positions have included Assistant Secretary, Trade Commitments Branch and Deputy Chief Negotiator for Australia at the commencement of the Trans-Pacific Partnership negotiations; Director, Free Trade Agreements Section and Legal Counsel on the Australia-Chile FTA negotiations; and Director, Canada, Latin America and Caribbean Section.

