

EIAS awarded European Commission Partnership Agreement

by Dr Willem van der Geest

After a lengthy period of uncertainty, the European Commission awarded a three year (ECPA) to the European Institute for Asian Studies for its work on relations with Asia. The award was won following the publication of an open and competitive Call for Proposals, published in the Official Journal of 18th November 2003 with a deadline for submission of applications on 31st December 2003. The EIAS application consists of a detailed application form plus a work programme, complemented by not less than 19 documents detailing the legal, financial, administrative and personnel features of EIAS. The contract with the European Commission has been signed in April 2004. The three year Partnership Agreement framework contract includes a 2004 work programme and budget. The maximum eligible grant will be for an amount up to €330.600 (no more than 70 per cent of the total eligible budget).

The Action Plan of EIAS for the implementation of the European Commission Partnership Agreement 2004-2006 is as follows:

The European Institute for Asian Studies (EIAS) is a Brussels-based research and policy think tank that analyses political, economic and security relations between the European Union (EU) and Asia. EIAS's annual work programmes during 2004-2006 will be developed on the basis of an annual strategic analysis of ongoing developments in Asia and the identification of the specific interests of the EU, as well as the feasible and desirable responses from the EU. The main instruments EIAS uses to develop and disseminate its strategic analyses are (i) public meetings and conferences, and (ii) regular publications, website and international presentations. For this it draws on a small in-house research capability as well as through its participation in sustainable networks with researchers and analysts from across EU and Asia.

Public meetings and conferences:

EIAS will offer a platform to high-profile speakers from Asian and European countries or institutions (e.g. Ministers/Executive Directors/ award-winning academics and analysts), seeking to ensure an informal exchange of views and information between them and analysts and decision makers from within the EU (approx. 4-6 per year). These sessions will be complemented by in-depth roundtables, at which a variety of viewpoints and interests will be represented, with a view to improving and deepening mutual understanding (approx 4-6 per year). Luncheon briefings, normally at the EIAS premises over a sandwich, will facilitate the informal discussion of politically sensitive subjects, sometimes off-the-record (6-8 per year). Occasional research workshops will facilitate the articulation of analytical perspectives on EU-Asia developments. To ensure an outreach to the international academic community, research workshops will normally be co-organised with European or Asian think tanks or research centres, especially with the European Alliance for Asian Studies (2-3 per year).

International conferences will seek to inform a wider audience about developments in Asia and the role of the EU in these (2-3 per year). International conferences foreseen

during 2004-06 will include the EU-ASEAN Think Tank Dialogue in Brussels/Lisbon (2004); Jakarta (2005) and Brussels/Warsaw (2006). Further conferences taking stock of progress of the Asia-Europe Meetings (ASEM) during 2004 and 2006 will be held in Brussels and possibly Helsinki. Asia Update meetings will be organised at the European Parliament (annually), in order to inform Members and their staff about developments in Asia and Europe's interest.

Regular publications, website and international presentations:

To reach a wide audience, EIAS will undertake the publication of the *EurAsia Bulletin*, EIAS Briefing Papers and EIAS Policy Briefs. These publications will generate articles, reviews and viewpoints, together comprising a baseline analysis of EU-Asia relations. The publications are disseminated through the EIAS website as well as through targeted free circulation within the EU institutions. EIAS senior staff will also participate (by invitation) in international academic meeting as speakers or co-chairs (approximately 4-6 times per year) and will also prepare ad-hoc advisory papers on the request of EU institutions (2-4 per year). EIAS will welcome approximately one hundred international visitors to its premises each year for informal discussion on aspects of EU-Asia relations.

Governance:

EIAS is a self-governing independent organisation with a small professional staff guided by an Administrative Board and Executive Committee, regulated under the public law of Belgium on *associations-sans-but-lucratif*. Its annual accounts and financial statements are prepared by a professional accountancy firm and audited in accordance with international auditing standards.

EIAS invites interested parties and possible partners to get in contact with the EIAS Director for comments, further information and ideas for collaboration. ■