

# ECSA WORLD-NEWS

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*Dear Presidents, dear colleagues, dear friends,*

*this issue is -together with a report about the annual conference of ECSA Spain- devoted to the Conference of EUSA Asia & Pacific in Hong Kong. EUSA Asia & Pacific gathers 10 independent associations of European Studies, from India to Australia and New Zealand; it organises once the year a Conference, each time at a different place (you may find more details in the article by Professor Ting Wei from the Baptist University in Hong Kong, this year's hosting institution). It is remarkable that the Conference is growing from year to year and now is able to attract participants not only from Asian countries in which ECSA is not yet existing, but also from other continents. It is an example of regional cooperation in a broad geographical space and including many different perspectives on the European Studies; a fruitful dialogue is born each year. Always "veterans" in the European Studies (Dai Bingham from China, Toshiro Tanaka from Japan, Bruno Mascitelli from Australia, Martin Holland from New Zealand, Rajendra Jain from India, among others) do share their experience also with younger colleagues, and it is fascinating to look at the list of contributors from Australia, Belgium, China, Germany, Hong Kong, Hungary, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Korea, New Zealand, Poland, Singapore, Spain, Taiwan, Turkey, United Kingdom, United States, Viet Nam - and ECSA World (I hope I forgot no one country; my apologies if that happened!).*

*Next year's Conference will be held in July in Japan. Therefore, one of our Japanese colleagues is taking over the EUSA Asia & Pacific Presidency: every year it changes, and the organising association is for one year responsible for the Presidency, whereas the Secretariat is always linked to ECSA New Zealand.*

*So - many thanks to our colleagues from far away - geographically only! - and all the best in the preparation of the next meeting.*

*Best regards,  
Enrique Banús*

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# Annual Conference of European Union Studies Association-Asia Pacific

29-30 June 2016, Hong Kong Baptist University



*By Professor Ting Wai, Department of Government & International Studies, Hong Kong Baptist University (HKBU). President of Hong Kong Association for European Studies and President of the European Union Studies Association-Asia Pacific.*

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The academic conference *30 Years After the Single European Act*, organized by the European Studies Association Asia-Pacific (EUSA Asia-Pacific), Hong Kong Association for European Studies (HKAES) and Department of Government and International Studies, HKBU took place in the Lam Woo International Conference Centre on 29 and 30 June 2016. It was an international conference featuring over 80 scholars and graduate students from all over the world, sharing their research and insights on the occasion of the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the signing of the Single European Act (SEA). The event is sponsored by the European Commission, GIS

Department, Research Committee, School of Communication, and Institute of Creativity (Hung Hiu Shiu Charitable Foundation) of the Hong Kong Baptist University.

The SEA was the first major revision of the 1957 *Treaty of Rome*, which gave birth to the European Economic Community. Its objectives include the establishment of the Single Market by the end of 1992 and the codification of European Political Cooperation. As the creation of a unified, borderless Single Market is the core element in the SEA, it is expected that enhanced competitiveness among European countries can best be achieved through increased harmonization. As such, the SEA underpins the current form of the European Union.

The conference's Welcome Session took place in the morning of 29 June, officiated by Prof. Ting Wai, President of EUSA Asia-Pacific and HKAES, and Prof. Jean-Pierre Cabestan,

Head, GIS Department, HKBU. Welcoming address on behalf of the University was delivered by Prof. Rick W. K. Wong Vice-President (Research and Development) HKBU. Dr. Jolita Pons, Head, Political, Press and Information Section, Office of the European Union in Hong Kong and Macau, was the Keynote Speaker that morning. The Welcome Session was attended by Prof. Roland T. Chin, President and Vice-Chancellor HKBU and Prof Adrian Bailey, Dean of Faculty of Social Sciences, as well as some 100 participants, including representatives from the Office of the European Union in Hong Kong and Macau.

The multidisciplinary conference focused on the various themes pertaining to the SEA and the Asia-Pacific region. The bulk of the conference's sessions took place in Rooms WLB 109 and WLB 104, Lam Woo International Conference Centre. The main themes include: EU and China, EU and Asia/World, Single European Act, EU Enlargement, EU-ASEAN, EU Internal Politics/Integration, Normative Power Structure, Australian Perspectives on the EU, Trade/Economics/Financial Crisis, EU-FTA in Asia and TPP, EU Policies, Law and Security, Migration and the Refugee Crisis and Cultural Issues. Altogether there were 15 panels, with 59 presenters coming from Australia, Japan, Italy, People's Republic of China, Taiwan, United States, New Zealand, Poland, Singapore, Belgium, Indonesia, United Kingdom, Vietnam, Hungary, Germany, South Korea, Turkey, Spain and Hong Kong.

In addition to the core sessions, a one-day Postgraduate Workshop in which young scholars, from Belgium, United Kingdom, Japan, South Korea, New Zealand, Hong Kong and Taiwan, were organized into 4 panels. 13 papers were presented, and discussed such issues as the EU and Asia/ASEAN, as well as cultural and economic issues in relation to EU's future. There was also a EUSA Presidents' Meeting, an annual event of the ten national/regional EUSAs.

In view of the result of *Brexit* referendum in late June, a special session on the impact of the UK's possible withdrawal from the European Union was held on 30 June. This session features Prof. Bingran Dai (Fudan University), Prof. Toshiro Tanaka (Keio University), Prof. Martin Holland (EUSA-Asia Pacific Secretary-General) and Prof. Enrique Banús (University of Piura, and President of ECSA World). It was chaired by HKBU's Prof. Ting Wai. This specific session aroused heated discussions on the domestic consequences of *Brexit* on Great Britain and the implications towards the future of EU.

It is our honour to have Prof Enrique Banús to deliver the closing address at the last session of the conference.

Recent EUSA Asia-Pacific Annual Conferences have been held in Bangkok (2011), Singapore (2012), Macau (2013), Melbourne (2014), and Seoul (2015). The 2017 conference will take place 29-30 June 2017 in Tokyo (Japan).

## Conclusive remarks

### By Prof. Enrique Banús

The main theme of the EUSA Asia-Pacific Annual Conferences is related to the Single European Act (SEA), because of its 30th anniversary. That is the reason why Prof. Banús (president of ECSA World) focused his speech in this document but from the currently European Union crisis point of view. He outlined that from the history we can identify two elements that could help us to understand this situation of crisis.

Firstly, if we have a look to the Single European Act, we will see that it is a special document: brief, "round" and clear. It is focused in few accurate and affordable objectives which are: to complete the Single Market, to include social cohesion, and to

provide a legal basis to the European cooperation in foreign affairs. So, the great virtue of the Single Act is precisely the specific but ambitious few goals it has. But then, explained Prof Banús, European politicians have gone on another line: the line of the big projects (best example: The European Constitution) "without restraint, without measure, without moderation".

Secondly, there is the question of referendums. Prime Minister of the United Kingdom from 2010 to 2016 David Cameron has convoked one (referendum), has lost it, and "it will cause an enormous damage". Why does he do it? For president of ECSA World, we should look back: to approve the European Constitution, Jacques Chirac called a referendum in France, an unnecessary one from a legal point of view (unnecessary just as the one called by Cameron). "He did it because his popularity was decreasing and he probably thought that a referendum of Europe would have a positive result and so that he will remount in his own personal fall". But, "he came off badly": his disrepute dragged the NO to Europe. And Europe into one of its most serious crises. Why Cameron did it? He needed an endorsement within his own party, where there is a significant Eurosceptic current". Cameron thought that the referendum (for Socialist, Scottish support, etc.) would go forward and that would give a boost within his party. He did not come out and "dragged Europe into a major crisis".

To sum up, the lesson for Prof. Banús is: "it is very risky to use the European project as a tool for own political purposes".

# 9<sup>th</sup> International ECSA Spain Conference: "Spain within a changeable European Union"

Last 10th of June the city of Madrid was the scene of the ninth International ECSA Spain-Audesco symposium called "Spain within a changeable European Union". It was held at the Faculty of Economics of the Complutense University of Madrid (UCM).

This one-day conference counted on the participation of chairs, professors and specialists of the European studies sphere. Sara González, Jean Monnet ad personam Chair and president of ECSA Spain gave the opening speech.

There were two round tables. The first one in the presence of Yolanda Gómez, Jean Monnet ad personam Chair and Constitutional Law Chair at National University of Distance Education (Madrid) and Manuel Nuñez, Jean Monnet Chair from UCM. In the second one, there were Martí Pachame (University of Barcelona) and Gustavo Calvo (Financial director).

Other communications were presented by Salvador Forner (Alicante University), Rafael Trémul (Engineer and International consultant), Fernando González Botija (UCM) and Inés Martín de Santos (European University of Madrid).

The conference concluded with a speech by Prof. Tania González-Alvarez from Guadalajara University (México).