

**Prof. Clara Portela - School of Social Sciences, Singapore Management University**  
**“Coherence of the EU's Foreign Policy from Maastricht to Lisbon: Impact on the EU's Asian partners”**

Coherence, a principle guiding foreign policies, is particularly difficult to achieve in the external policy of the European Union due to its fragmented nature: Certain external policies are formulated by the Community, while others are agreed intergovernmentally. In order to surmount the difficulties posed by the presence of foreign policy powers across different pillars, the Treaty on European Union exhorts the EU to act coherently. In support of this obligation, certain coherence-friendly institutional arrangements were put in place which have been perfected over time. In the case of the Lisbon Treaty, reforms concerning external relations were explicitly justified with a view to enhancing coherence. The present paper examines the evolution of coherence in the foreign policy of the EU since the Maastricht Treaty from the point of view of Asian countries. Have subsequent reforms made a difference to political elites in Asia? The investigation will make reference to the extent to which Asia has been affected by inconsistencies and it will discuss the adequacy of the improvements introduced by Lisbon and their effects on relations with Asia.