



The European Union sets its sights high on ambitions with China

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Federica **Mogherini**, the High Representative/Vice-President, said: *"The European Union and China already cooperate on so much: we work together on the global and political issues of our times, such as Iran, Syria, Afghanistan, migration and climate change. But we can and must do more to connect the European Union and China. Our citizens, industries, and organisations can all benefit from a closer, improved, and better-defined EU-China relationship based on shared responsibility. The [Joint Communication](#) that we have adopted today will, I am sure, enable our relationship to fulfil its clear potential."*

The [Joint Communication](#) identifies major opportunities for the EU's relationship with China, in particular with the aim of creating jobs and growth in Europe as well as vigorously promoting a greater opening up of the Chinese market to European business, thus contributing to the first priority of President Juncker's Commission.

Such opportunities include concluding an ambitious and comprehensive agreement on investment, a Chinese contribution to the Investment Plan for Europe (*), joint research and innovation activities, as well as connecting the Eurasian continent via a physical and digital network through which trade, investment and people-to-people contact can flow.

Looking further ahead, broader ambitions such as a deep and comprehensive Free Trade Agreement can be considered once an ambitious investment agreement between the two sides has been concluded and reforms that level the playing field for domestic and foreign companies have been implemented. In this regard, China must make significant, time-bound and verifiable cuts in industrial over-capacity, notably in the steel sector, to prevent negative consequences from unfair competition. Further strengthening the effectiveness of the EU's Trade Defence Instruments, notably through the swift adoption of the Commission's Trade Defence Instruments modernisation proposal of April 2013, is key. The EU will continue to support China's economic and social reform programme through its many dialogues with China so that the country can reap the full benefits of market-led reform, including by eliminating state-induced economic distortions and reforming state-owned enterprises.

The [Joint Communication](#) also highlights opportunities for closer cooperation and partnership between the EU and China in the fields of foreign and security policy. Building on the positive experience of the Iran nuclear talks, the European Union and China should work more closely together in order to resolve international conflicts and foreign policy priorities both bilaterally and in multilateral contexts such as the UN system and in the G20. Issues of a global nature like migration, international development assistance, the environment and fighting climate change can only be resolved through a global response, and for this reason a collaborative EU-China relationship is crucial.

The EU's engagement with China will be principled, practical and pragmatic, staying true to its interests and values, in particular adherence to international rules and norms, and respect for human rights. The EU should continue to work cohesively and effectively as a coherent block to achieve ambitious objectives on behalf of European citizens.

The Joint Communication will now be presented to the Council and to the European Parliament.

Background:

The European Commission's last Communication on China in 2006 was adopted a decade ago. The EU and China have both undergone considerable changes since then. China is becoming more present in

all regions of the world, economically and politically. This new reality calls for a fresh EU narrative that recognises the need to deal with these new developments. The EU's new strategy therefore sets out to promote EU interests and underline EU values in its relationship with China for the next five years.

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