

## **President Xi Jinping Met with President of the European Council Charles Michel and President of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen**

2020/06/22

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President Xi Jinping met with President of the European Council Charles Michel and President of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen via video link on the evening of 22 June.

Xi commended the mutual support and help between China and the EU in response to COVID-19 and expressed China's readiness to work with the EU for the relationship to grow more solid and mature and reach greater heights in the post-COVID-19 era.

Xi said that China is both an ancient civilization with rich heritage and a developing country full of dynamism. What China pursues, he stressed, is peace rather than hegemony. Every policy China adopts and every effort it makes are aimed at building a better life for the Chinese people. He reaffirmed China's unwavering commitment to peaceful development. "China offers an opportunity rather than a threat," Xi said. As China continues to deepen reform and open up wider to the world, it will bring to the EU new opportunities for cooperation and new prospects of growth. "China is a partner rather than a rival," Xi pointed out. Between China and the EU, there is no fundamental conflict of interests. The two sides have far more areas of cooperation than competition, and much more common understandings than differences. Xi stressed the importance of mutual respect, seeking common ground and pursuing harmony without uniformity. This will enable the two sides to build up mutual understanding and trust, expand the convergence of interests through cooperation and overcome difficulties through development. Together, China and the EU will make their comprehensive strategic partnership one of global significance.

Noting the profound changes caused by COVID-19, Xi shared his views on how China-EU relations should develop in a world with rising uncertainty and instability. "One must explore new opportunities and make new advances amid challenges and changes," Xi said, "and the same is true for China-EU relations." As two major forces, two big markets and two great civilizations,

China and Europe can make a difference for the world by demonstrating what they stand for, what they oppose and what they can achieve in cooperation. Xi pointed out three directions for China and EU to work along:

China and the EU have to be two major forces for world peace and stability. Xi expressed China's readiness to communicate with the EU on important issues and its confidence in the prospects of an even more united, stable, open and prosperous European Union. China welcomes the constructive contribution to international peace and stability by the EU, and will work with the EU to strengthen strategic cooperation to jointly respond to global challenges.

China and the EU have to be two major markets for world development and prosperity. As two major economies, China and Europe should serve as the "twin engines" for world economic recovery. The two sides should jointly support scientific and orderly reopening of economic activities, strengthen macroeconomic policy coordination, and ensure the steady and smooth functioning of global industrial and supply chains. They need to keep markets open to each other, accelerate negotiations on the China-EU investment agreement, strengthen green and digital cooperation, and build the green development partnership. The two sides need to step up third-party cooperation with Africa.

China and Europe have to be two major civilizations for upholding multilateralism and improving global governance. No matter how the international landscape may evolve, China will always stand on the side of multilateralism, and conduct global governance in line with the principles of extensive consultation, joint contribution and shared benefits. China commends the EU for its strong commitment to multilateralism, participation in global cooperation against COVID-19 and increased contribution to the World Health Organization and other international institutions. China will work with the EU to step up coordination and cooperation on major regional and international issues, strengthen dialogue and collaboration on global public health governance, and jointly build a global community of health for all.

Xi stressed his readiness to maintain close communication with the two Presidents to advance the major political agenda between China and the EU and take the China-EU relations to a new level.

Michel and von der Leyen noted the vitality of the relations between China and the EU, two of the world's major economies. In a world with mounting uncertainties, international cooperation is necessary for tackling global challenges, and dialogue and consultation are needed for addressing conflicts and regional instabilities. The EU is willing to engage in strategic dialogue and expand common ground with China in a candid manner. The EU will strengthen cooperation with China on vaccine development and economic reopening, expand bilateral trade, pursue greater progress in a wide range of areas including green and low-carbon development and digital economy, conclude the EU-China investment agreement as early as possible, and work together to overcome the impact of COVID-19 and drive global economic recovery. The EU is committed to multilateralism and will strengthen coordination and collaboration with China on major issues such as global health security, climate change, sustainable development and tripartite cooperation with Africa under such frameworks as the UN, the WTO and the G20. The EU will work with China to ensure the success of the major political agenda agreed to by the two sides.

<http://www.chinamission.be/eng/mhs/t1791692.htm>

**Premier Li Keqiang Co-chairs the 22nd China-EU Summit with European Council President Charles Michel and European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen**

2020/06/23

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Premier Li Keqiang co-chaired the 22nd China-EU Summit with European Council President Charles Michel and European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen via video link at the Great Hall of the People on the afternoon of 22 June.

Li said that China and the EU are comprehensive strategic partners, and there is far more cooperation than competition and far more common ground than disagreement between the two sides. He said that China highly values its relations with the EU, and President Xi Jinping would later have a meeting with you via video link. Over the past 45 years since the establishment of diplomatic ties, cooperation has been the mainstay of China-EU relations. This relationship has boosted the well-being of people on both sides, and brought greater stability to a world experiencing fast and complex change. China has all along supported European integration and welcomes a united and prosperous Europe. The two sides should view the China-EU relations from a long-term and broader perspective, and stay committed to the comprehensive strategic partnership. The two sides need to enhance mutual understanding through more dialogue, pursue mutual benefits through closer cooperation, and make joint contributions to peace, stability, development and prosperity of the world.

Li emphasized that in the face of the huge impact of COVID-19, China and the EU, as two major economies, need to strengthen macroeconomic policy coordination and work together to maintain stability in the industrial and supply chains of both sides and the wider world and boost global economic recovery. The two sides need to work for the conclusion of negotiations on a comprehensive, balanced and high-level investment treaty within this year and for early signing of the China-EU agreement on geographical indications. China remains steadfast in pursuing peaceful development and advancing its opening-up. China is committed to fostering a world-class, market-oriented business environment governed by a sound legal framework for enterprises of all countries. European businesses have benefited in this process. China hopes

that the EU side will also keep its trade and investment market open to China, ease export restrictions, and facilitate high-tech trade between the two sides. Greater two-way openness between China and the EU on the basis of equality, mutual benefit and mutual respect could better bring win-win results to both sides.

Noting that both China and the EU are supportive of multilateralism and free trade, Li expressed China's readiness to maintain communication with the EU on WTO reform and other issues to jointly uphold the rules-based multilateral trading regime, and to take a constructive part in the multilateral process on climate change, in an effort to further enrich the China-EU comprehensive strategic partnership. Li called for continued support for WHO's leading role in international cooperation against COVID-19 and for closer cooperation in vaccine and drug research and development in pursuit of early victory over the virus through concerted efforts.

Michel and von der Leyen said that this year marks the 45th anniversary of EU-China diplomatic ties. In a world full of challenges, the EU and China have maintained close communication and exchanges, and have supported and stood with each other in the fight against the coronavirus. Despite the impact of COVID-19, the wish of EU and China for cooperation is as strong as ever. The EU appreciates China's active participation in the EU's initiative for international cooperation against the virus. The EU is ready to strengthen cooperation with China on economic recovery and work with China to uphold the security of industrial and supply chains. It is hoped the two sides will further open up markets, enhance connectivity, deepen cooperation in trade, investment, the digital economy and other areas, and conclude the EU-China investment agreement within the year. The EU will work for early completion of its internal procedures on the EU-China Geographical Indications agreement. It is ready to work with China to intensify communication and coordination on the WTO reform, strengthen cooperation on tackling climate change, jointly uphold multilateralism and free trade, and work for a more sustainable and secure world.

The two sides also had an in-depth exchange of views on international and regional issues of mutual interest.

<http://www.chinamission.be/eng/mhs/t1791693.htm>

## **Ambassador Zhang Ming Gives an Exclusive Interview to CGTN**

2020/06/20

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On 16 June 2020, Ambassador Zhang Ming, Head of the Chinese Mission to the EU, gave an interview to CGTN Europe correspondent Nawied Jabarkhyl. Ambassador Zhang answered questions about the high-level exchanges and cooperation between China and the EU. The following is the transcript:

**Q: You recently ended the latest EU-China Strategic Dialogue, what were the key takeaways from the meeting?**

A: Last week, Chinese State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi and EU High Representative Josep Borrell co-chaired the 10th China-EU High-level Strategic Dialogue. It was the first strategic dialogue between the two senior diplomats, since Mr. Borrell took office at the end of last year. Due to the pandemic, the dialogue was held via video link, but it did not dampen in the slightest the enthusiasm and willingness of the two sides to strengthen communication. The dialogue lasted for more than three hours.

The strategic dialogue is strategic in both letter and spirit. From a strategic perspective, the two sides took stock of the achievements made and experience gained in China-EU cooperation. As State Councilor Wang Yi pointed out, for China and the EU, cooperation outweighs competition, and convergences outweigh divergences. China and the EU are not systemic rivals, but comprehensive strategic partners in the long term. An important message conveyed by the two sides is that both China and the EU support multilateralism and commit to addressing global challenges through coordination and cooperation and promoting global peace and prosperity.

The strategic dialogue bears out the value of dialogue. Despite differences in social systems, China and the EU could well build trust through dialogue on an equal footing and deal with differences through constructive communication. State Councilor Wang Yi quoted an ancient Chinese philosopher by saying that “all living things should grow in harmony without hurting one another; and all the ways should move forward without interfering with one another” . He stressed that China and the EU need to treat each other as equals and with

mutual respect, and seek common ground while reserving differences. He added that the two sides could appreciate each other, learn from each other and make progress together. Mr. Borrell said that the EU respects the development path chosen by the Chinese people, considers China's role in the international arena important, and would seek dialogue and cooperation with China, not rivalry or confrontation.

**Q: China-EU high level meeting is going to be held later this month. What's your expectation of the meeting? What will be on the agenda?**

A: The 22nd China-EU Summit will be held via video link next week. The summit, held against the backdrop of the pandemic, will be the first of its kind after the inauguration of the new EU leadership at the end of last year. I am confident that the summit will help increase political mutual trust, enhance practical cooperation, and strengthen coordination and collaboration in regional and international affairs between China and the EU, shedding new light on the global significance of China-EU comprehensive strategic partnership.

With regard to the agenda, the two sides will review the development of China-EU relations in the past year, notably the investment agreement negotiations and a new cooperation agenda for the next five years, and explore further cooperation in such areas as green development, digital economy and connectivity. Of course, the two sides will also exchange views on the international cooperation against COVID-19 and health cooperation between the two sides.

We have seen the rise of unilateralism and protectionism amid the pandemic. Many are worried about the fate of globalization. I believe the summit will once again send a clear message that China and the EU are firmly committed to upholding multilateralism, keeping the stability of industrial and supply chains, promoting WTO reform, improving global governance, and working together for the recovery of the world economy.

**Q: There's a lot of pressure on China in Western Europe in particular at the moment, from its handling of COVID-19 to Hong Kong, how do you understand the pressure and maintain dialogue?**

A: There could be differences in any bilateral relations. It is quite normal that

China and the EU have different concerns, since they are different in history, culture and level of development. My colleagues and I do not see it as pressure, but as a challenge that make the life of diplomats rewarding. In fact, China and the EU have a wide range of shared interests, views and areas of cooperation. Both sides believe that we should promote cooperation in areas where we converge and enhance mutual understanding and manage differences through dialogue in areas where we disagree. This is a valuable asset in our relations, a sign of mutual respect and trust, and an integral part of China-EU partnership.

COVID-19 has indeed brought some complexities. For example, some label China as a “systemic rival” and even trumpet the idea of “decoupling” with China. I also noticed that European leaders and senior officials, including German Chancellor Angela Merkel and High Representative Josep Borrell, have repeatedly emphasized the importance of China-EU relations and expressed their commitment to keeping dialogue with China and promoting cooperation in a wide range of areas. I think this is the mainstream view in the EU and a shared wish of both sides.

Hong Kong affairs are China’s internal affairs which brook no external interference. As partners, China and the EU have maintained communication and exchanges. On the national security legislation in Hong Kong, there are some concerns from the EU, and I have spoken to EU colleagues in the past few weeks to explain the situation. Even if the EU cannot take in China’s stance for the time being, we will strive to manage our differences through communication and safeguard our cooperation, common interests and the interests of the wider international community. This is the right thing to do.

**Q: How do you see the concerns by some EU countries toward the use of Huawei in their 5G network? Do you think their concerns are justified?**

A: 5G is a new technology closely linked to the future of mankind. It’s quite natural that there is a lot of interest in its security. No country with a sense of responsibility would afford to be “naïve” on this issue. 5G companies must comply with high security standards if they are to win customer trust and grow sustainably. No companies would afford to give little heed to security and ruin their reputation. Yet security is a technological issue that calls for facts- and science-based analysis and judgment, rather than geopolitically-driven bashing or fear-mongering, still less groundless discrediting to hamstring certain

companies. Such acts are irresponsible, departure from science and justice.

We live in an era full of security challenges. Cybersecurity is a complex and thorny global challenge that can only be addressed through international cooperation, especially in the 5G era. Discrediting, pressuring, or setting limits on a certain country's companies will not help solve the problem, and would only hurt all. In addressing the challenge of cybersecurity, China and the EU share a broad range of common interests and should maintain effective communication and strong cooperation.

**Q: We're seeing lots of pressure here in the UK for the government to turn its back on Huawei and on closer links to China - is this a concern you're having to combat in Brussels too?**

A: As a global actor, the EU has the tradition of adhering to multilateralism, free trade and market principles. The EU often says that these principles are in its DNA. I believe that the EU is able to stay the course, keep the independence of its policies and make decisions based on its own interests. I also believe that the EU will not allow its DNA to mutate and will not succumb to external pressure.

The pandemic has taught us a lot. One important lesson is that isolation and seclusion lead us nowhere, and that openness and cooperation offer a way out. No one could develop behind closed doors and overcome crises on his own. China will unswervingly advance opening up and roll out more measures to expand opening up of its own accord. We also hope that the EU side will stick to the right direction and provide an open, fair, just and non-discriminatory environment for China-EU cooperation in various fields, such as economy, trade, science and technology.

**Q: What help has China given to EU countries around COVID-19? With European countries beginning to ease lockdown measures, is there more cooperation between China and EU coming in terms of healthcare, including supplies, vaccines development, etc?**

A: In fighting the pandemic, China and the EU have reached out to each other in these trying times. Leaders of the two sides have maintained frequent communication via phone call, videoconferencing and exchange of correspondence, and conducted fruitful exchanges on provision of emergency

supplies, keeping the safety of industrial chains, and strengthening macro-policy coordination. When gravely hit by the pandemic, China and the EU have offered each other urgently needed medical supplies. China has sent several medical teams to Europe to fight the virus on the front line. The two sides have set up an ad-hoc expert group. Chinese and European scientists and medical workers have held several online conferences to share experience. At present, we are resuming personnel exchanges in a steady and orderly manner, and opening “fast-track lanes” for essential visits to China in the fields of commerce, logistics, production and technological services, so as to facilitate resumption of work.

China and the EU take an active part in the global response to the pandemic. President Xi Jinping announced at the World Health Assembly that coronavirus vaccines developed by China will be a global public good. Chinese Premier Li Keqiang attended the Global Vaccine Summit and pledged to support, which was highly commended by the EU. The EU initiated the global pledging conference to advance vaccine development and production. I attended the conference on behalf of the Chinese government and made pledges. China and the EU are exploring trilateral cooperation with Africa on fighting the outbreak. Most importantly, China and the EU firmly support the WHO playing a key role in leading the global response to the pandemic. These are good efforts to build a global community of health for all, and to reflect the high-level performance of China-EU relations.

**Q: China and the EU currently have a Comprehensive Agreement on Investment. What are the efforts to push for an FTA? If so, how far off could that be?**

A: Economic and trade cooperation is an important part of China-EU relations. Over the past decade, Europe has been China’s largest trading partner. China and the EU have always regarded the negotiation on the investment agreement as the top priority on their economic agenda. At last April’s summit, Chinese and EU leaders announced the objective of completing the negotiation by 2020. Since then, both sides have redoubled their efforts to translate the political commitment into actions.

The negotiation is going on intensively. Despite the pandemic, both sides keep up the negotiation through video conference once a month and a week each

time. They are working hard and productively. The 29th round of negotiation, just concluded at the end of last May, made headway. In June and July, the two sides will hold another two rounds of negotiation.

Of course, negotiation is not an easy job. Just as it takes two to tango, it calls for the joint efforts of both sides to get things done. As the pandemic is taking a heavy toll on global economy, to complete the negotiation as scheduled is of even greater relevance. We hope that the EU side will work together with China in a pragmatic and flexible manner, with a view to concluding a high-level agreement at an early date, and injecting strong impetus into China-EU cooperation and the rules-based multilateral trading system. With regard to the FTA, China takes a positive, open and flexible attitude.

**Q: Britain left the EU earlier this year - is that an opportunity as far as China is concerned? How do you see the relations between EU and China?**

A: Chinese people value harmony. Regarding China's policy toward the EU, we commit to the "three supports", namely supporting the European integration process, supporting a united and strong EU, and supporting a bigger role of a stable and prosperous Europe in international affairs. Such commitment is consistent, be it before or after Brexit. In Brussels, I'm often asked about how I look upon Brexit. I often quote an old Chinese saying that "one prefers to persuade a couple to stay together than to divorce". After all, getting separated is hurtful. Brexit is a matter concerning the UK and the EU, and China, as a third party, does not intervene. Brexit talks are coming to a critical stage. China sincerely hopes that the two sides can properly handle the relevant issues and reduce the resulting impact on the EU, the UK, China and the world economy. China will continue to promote parallel development of China-EU and China-UK relations.

China and the EU established diplomatic ties 45 years ago and have become comprehensive strategic partners. We are building four partnerships for peace, growth, reform and civilization. The bilateral trade is 300 times that of the early days of our diplomatic ties. Nearly 800 two-way visits are made every year. China-EU cooperation has expanded to many areas such as peace and security, environment, science and technology, culture, education and health. The two sides work together to tackle global challenges. The bilateral relations are showing unprecedented global and strategic significance. In face of profound

changes unseen in a century, China and the EU have their respective ambitious development goals. It is a shared choice to promote robust growth, lasting peace, sustained innovation, clean environment and cultural diversity, which will unleash even greater vitality in their cooperation.

As the pandemic is still wreaking havoc, I believe that China and the EU will continue to show solidarity, avoid being swayed by external noises, contribute to the global fight against the pandemic, and further strengthen their relations.

**Q: Yesterday the EU announced that it would impose tariffs on the glass fiber products made by Chinese manufacturers in Egypt on the grounds that relevant products had been subsidized by the Chinese government. The news was released by the EU just before the summit. How would you comment upon this? Will it have any impact on the summit?**

A: The issue of subsidies is closely watched by many. China and the EU maintain close communication on this issue. China is concerned about the EU's subsidies for agriculture while the EU often talk about China's industrial subsidies. As far as China is concerned, our subsidies to some industries are completely in compliance with WTO rules.

Both China and Egypt are developing countries. China's cooperation with other developing countries like Egypt is South-South cooperation that has provided significant impetus to the development of developing countries. We hope that the EU side will maintain communication with its partners, resolve differences through consultation. In particular, it is important to respect the cooperation among developing countries, and offer developing countries more space for development.

**Q: Last week the EU criticized China for spreading disinformation about the COVID-19. How do you look upon this?**

A: Since the outbreak, disinformation has indeed posed a serious challenge. China is the victim to this harmful phenomenon. We are working together with the international community to fight disinformation.

It is surprising and hard to understand that the EU criticizes China for spreading disinformation. I have noticed that the joint communication published last week simply puts the label on China and fails to provide concrete evidence to prove

that China is spreading disinformation. Fighting disinformation requires good faith and should not become a political instrument, otherwise the global cooperation against the pandemic will be eroded.

To defeat the virus, we need cooperation and solidarity. I hope that the EU could work with China and the international community to deal with disinformation. Such efforts should not be selective. Otherwise, it will not be a real fight against disinformation and there may be ulterior motives at play.

<http://www.chinamission.be/eng/mh/t1790688.htm>

## **Remarks by H.E. Ambassador Zhang Ming at the CEPS Webinar "EU-China Relations Post COVID-19 Challenges and Opportunities"**

2020/06/19

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On June 18, 2020, the Chinese Mission to the EU and the Centre for European Policy Studies (CEPS) jointly organized the 22nd China-EU Summit Briefing and the China-EU Relations Seminar in the Post-epidemic Era. Ambassador Zhang Ming, Head of Chinese Mission to the EU, attended the seminar and delivered a keynote Remarks. The full text is as follows:

Mr. Daniel Gros,

Mr. Huang Ping,

Mr. Karel Lannoo

Mrs. Valentina PoP

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good morning. I am glad to join you in discussing China-EU relations in the context of COVID-19. No doubt, the outbreak is bringing profound changes to global politics, economy and social life. It has also generated new challenges and opportunities to the China-EU comprehensive strategic partnership.

The fight against the outbreak gives full expression to the value and potential of China-EU relations. We have reached out to each other in times of need, and are joining forces to promote global cooperation in expertise sharing, vaccine and medicine development, and so on. On the other hand, China-EU relations are facing more complexities in a changing political, economic and public opinion landscape due to the COVID-19.

The 22nd China-EU Summit next week will be the first annual summit since the inauguration of the new EU leadership, and the highest-level bilateral dialogue since the outbreak. The summit will be an important occasion for the two sides to discuss how to make our relations more productive and substantive by seizing opportunities and addressing challenges. There are three points worth mentioning here in the run-up to the summit.

First, strategic trust. We expect the summit to give a further boost to our strategic trust and mutually beneficial cooperation on the basis of mutual respect.

There have been some noises about "the battle of narratives". Yet the nature of China-EU relations, namely mutual benefit, remains unchanged. We are of the view that there is no fundamental conflict of interests between China and the EU. Our interaction should be a positive cycle that enables mutual success, not a knock-out match which allows only one winner. This is a most important thing we have learned from the past 45 years of diplomatic ties, and it is what we must keep in mind if we are to keep our relations on the right track.

China and the EU do have different political systems and ideologies. Yet we should not see the other as a systemic rival, still less to view cooperation through a geopolitical lens, or go so far as to question and misjudge the other's strategic intention. Our mutual help in the fight against the virus reflects our respect for lives and support for partners. China and the EU have carried out effective coordination in WHO and other multilateral frameworks, which shows that we have many commonalities in terms of thinking, interests and responsibilities. We could work together in even more areas.

Second, openness and cooperation. We expect the summit to reaffirm the commitment to openness and cooperation and lend fresh impetus to the investment agreement negotiation.

The pandemic increases the rhetoric of "decoupling". Yet the fact that our economies are interdependent would not change. Together, China and the EU account for one third of global GDP and have a huge stake in each other. The world is looking to us to steer the course of post-corona recovery in a spirit of openness and cooperation.

China stands ready to enhance macro-policy coordination with the EU to build greater synergies between our respective policy measures. By opening up fast-track services for personnel interflows and green corridors for flows of goods, we could facilitate resumption of work and keep industrial and supply chains stable. We need to strengthen cooperation in emerging areas such as green development and digital economy, to accelerate the shift of growth model and enhance the quality of development. China remains firmly committed to opening-up and will roll out more measures to expand opening up of its own

accord. We hope the EU will keep to the right direction by fostering a fair, impartial and non-discriminatory environment for China-EU cooperation.

Since last year's summit, China and the EU have signed the civil aviation agreements and completed the negotiation of the GI agreement. We are pushing forward the negotiation of the investment agreement, and have made good progress in terms of the negative list and text. Due to the pandemic, the Leipzig summit has to be rescheduled. Yet on China's part, the political commitment to concluding a high-level and balanced investment agreement on time will not change. Of course, it takes two to tango. Both sides need to be pragmatic and realistic and adopt a give-and-take approach. Only in this way can we get over the thorny issues and reach agreement.

Third, multilateralism. We expect the summit to send a strong signal of China and the EU jointly upholding multilateralism and rejecting unilateralism, translating commitment into more actions, and contributing to global cooperation and the betterment of global governance.

Globally, the pandemic is still taking a heavy toll. The most pressing thing at the moment is to strengthen global response and improve public health governance on the basis of multilateralism. No one is safe until everyone is safe. China and the EU need to jointly support WHO in playing the leading role, step up information and experience sharing, speed up vaccine and medicine development, increase the accessibility and affordability of vaccines, and contain the spread of the virus as quickly as possible. We need to jointly step up support to regions with vulnerable public health systems, notably to explore tripartite cooperation with Africa to help it bolster the defense line. In the post-corona era, we need to improve the public health governance system, and establish long-term solutions to public health emergencies.

Multilateralism is the common language of China and the EU, and is exactly where the strategic and global significance of China-EU relations could be born out. As two major economies, China and the EU commit to strengthen global economic governance, safeguard the multilateral trading system with WTO at the core, and put forward more initiatives to cut tariffs, remove barriers and promote investment. Climate change and biodiversity protection could also be promising areas of China-EU cooperation on global governance.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The annual summit allows us to build on the past achievement and make new progress. China hopes to work with the EU to deliver a successful summit and bring our relations to a higher level.

Thank you.

<http://www.chinamission.be/eng/mh/t1790479.htm>

# China, EU seek to inject momentum in recovery

By Chen Qingqing and Ma Jingjing Source: [Global Times](#) Published: 2020/6/23 1:13:40

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## No fundamental conflict between two sides: President Xi

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The high-level leaders' meeting [between China and the EU](#) on Monday expressed the willingness for the two sides to continuously enhance mutual political trust amid coronavirus epidemic and the shadow of a US-instigated new cold war, paving the way for reaching a bilateral investment agreement in the coming months, as some observers forecast. China and the EU are not systematic rivals, Beijing and Brussels should put consensus above divergences on some issues such as Hong Kong and Xinjiang to fuel world's recovery in the post-epidemic era, they noted.

The 22nd EU-China summit took place on Monday via videoconference during which Chinese President Xi Jinping and Premier Li Keqiang met with Charles Michel, President of the European Council, as well as Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Commission. Issues addressed at this virtual meeting included cooperation on the COVID-19 response, China-US relations, and other global and regional issues.

Xi stressed that there is no fundamental conflict [between China and the EU](#), and cooperation outweighs competition, so does consensus that exceeds divergences. China is a partner to EU rather than being a rival, the Chinese President said, urging that two sides to become major forces of safeguarding global peace and stability.

During the meeting, Premier Li and the EU leaders noticed the progress made in the negotiations and reaffirmed that both sides were committed to concluding the China-EU Comprehensive Investment Agreement in 2020, the Xinhua News Agency reported Monday.

The two sides are eager to enhance trust to achieve concrete results for the overdue investment agreement by the end of 2020, highly likely in November, Wang Yiwei, the director of the institute of international affairs at Renmin University of China in Beijing told the Global Times.

China and EU have been negotiating on the comprehensive agreement on investment since November 2013, and are scheduled to hold the 30th round of negotiations between June 29 and July 3.

"As Germany takes the lead in the EU as it will assume the rotating presidency from July 1 to December 31, it's an urgent task for German Chancellor Angela Merkel to finalize the agreement before December, given it could be her political legacy," Wang said.

The summit took place against the backdrop of the US rallying its Western allies to continue exerting pressure on the Chinese government over a number of matters, such as the epidemic response, upcoming national security law for Hong Kong, Xinjiang governance and human rights.

The EU's differing views on the upcoming national security law for Hong Kong are conceivable. Although the EU now stresses its geopolitical realism, it is also emphasizing its own values. Such differences have a long history and cannot be concealed, said Wang.

### **Pragmatic view**

The Chinese President urged two sides to remain two-way market opening up while accelerating negotiations on China-EU trade investment agreement, which is also seen as a 'milestone result' of strategic partnership development of the two major economies across the world.

The EU strongly emphasized the need to advance negotiations for the EU-China Comprehensive Investment Agreement that addresses the current asymmetries in market access and ensures a level playing field, according to its official statement.

The pragmatic view of China and EU from the perspective of policymakers is difficult to be swayed by lobbying efforts of some politicians like US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, some observers noted.

The EU and China need each other on global affairs such as addressing global health threats through international cooperation, working on WTO reform, facing climate change and collaborating on African issues, as the European Council described in its fact sheets on bilateral ties.

### **Toward an agreement**

The high-level meeting on Monday was also believed to have paved the way to accelerating talks on a long-overdue investment treaty, which would also inject new momentum for European economic recovery in the post-epidemic era.

EU-China Comprehensive Agreement on Investment talks scheduled to conclude by the end of 2020 is progressing as scheduled, despite the impact of the global pandemic. China and the EU held three rounds of talks between March and May, with negotiation arrangements already being made for the next several months.

In 2019, the EU was China's biggest trading partner, while China was EU's second-largest. Trade in goods between the two was worth more than 1.5 billion euro (\$1.68 billion) a day.

European companies have long been attracted to Chinese market, thanks to its sheer size and huge growth potential. Even during the worst stage of the COVID-19 outbreak in China in February, nearly 50 percent of 1,700 EU companies operating in China were optimistic about their growth over the next two years, according to a survey conducted by the European Union Chamber of Commerce in China.

As for the EU's push for China to open up its market equally, the bloc should consider China's domestic conditions and not politicize economic and trade issues, said Cui Hongjian, director of the Department of European Studies, China Institute of International Studies.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/content/1192471.shtml>

## China-EU cooperation should not be derailed by misleading Western voices

By Wang Jiamei Source: **Global Times** Published: 2020/6/22 16:48:40

Certain Western media outlets are tireless in exaggerating any setback related to the China-proposed Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), but that is a sign of the growing influence of the grand economic cooperation and development plan.

Last week, the EU decided to impose an anti-subsidy duty on imports of glass fiber fabrics from two Egypt-based Chinese exporters, citing the "market-distorting aid" from the Chinese and Egyptian governments that the companies received. Both companies are based in the China-Egypt Suez Economic and Trade Cooperation Zone (SETC-Zone), a program under the BRI infrastructure plan. According to the European Commission, "The governments of Egypt and China have pooled their resources to provide the companies manufacturing in the SETC-Zone with favorable conditions that confer benefits to them."

Since the development marks the first time that the EU has punished exporters located in a third country for receiving government aid, some Western media have hailed the case as landmark and one that takes aim at the BRI.

However, from another perspective, the EU's reaction may serve as the latest example of the increasing influence of the economic cooperation between China and European countries under the BRI framework. Trade may be only one aspect of the rising economic impact that the EU is inevitably feeling.

It should be noted that the BRI is an ambitious plan whose like has never been put forward before, and that means it will inevitably face various challenges in terms of the economy, politics, and diplomacy, among others. Thus it is entirely understandable and normal that the BRI cooperation between China and Europe

will encounter some small setbacks during the construction process.

While misleading views of the BRI are not uncommon these days, it would be narrow-minded to earnestly guard against the potential of BRI cooperation. If countries did not stand to benefit from the BRI program, there would not be so many countries and organizations interested in it. If anything, the EU should realize that the foundation of the plan is China's potential, which is reflected in its huge labor market and consumer demand. And BRI cooperation will stimulate new opportunities in China's market, which will certainly do more good than harm for Europe as a whole.

That is why we hope the EU, in the context of the new Cold War between China and the US, can overcome the challenges and take a pragmatic approach toward BRI cooperation with China, with more economic thinking and less geopolitical consideration.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/content/1192405.shtml>

## **BRI lights future for Greece-China ties**

By George Floras Source: **Global Times** Published: 2020/6/8 16:28:41

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### **Trade opportunities expected in energy, transport**

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Greece was the first country in the European Union (EU) to sign an agreement with China for the development of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), despite objections from EU leadership.

Greece was also the first country to support China in early 2020 when the COVID-19 outbreak began - at a time when other countries were turning against

China, claiming it was responsible.

As soon as China overcame the first effects of the pandemic, it reciprocated Greek support and sent significant medical supplies to help the country. This was recognized by all media and the Greek people.

Greece was the first European country to organize an investment forum, which took place in early June, with the support of the Greek government and China's Development and Reform Commission. More than 400 Chinese investors interested in investing overseas participated. The forum was organized to show that Greece has started again from where it left off before the pandemic.

Greece is a European country that is particularly sympathetic to Chinese investment, despite pressure from various parties such as the EU and the US.

Greece is China's greatest partner in Europe, which was made clear by the Minister for Development and Investment of Greece Adonis Georgiadis at the forum, speaking directly to Chinese investors.

The above is evidence of a bright future in political and trade relations between the two countries.

The two nations with ties reaching back to ancient times are now called upon to work together to promote the spirit of the BRI.

Greece is at a strategic geographical point, and this is an advantage for China which has already invested in the port of Piraeus. The European part of the China-Europe Continental Express (CECE) line starts in Greece. Greece supports the further development of the CECE railway line and is cooperating with China to contribute positively to other European countries in this regard. It is no coincidence that Greece has been identified as China's most reliable partner in Europe.

Trade opportunities for Chinese people in Greece are important in the fields of energy, transport, information technology, communications technology, manufacturing, and research and development - the five major areas of

cooperation between the two countries. There are also significant prospects for cooperation in the field of tourism, as more than 35 million tourists visit Greece annually to relax and enjoy 20 centuries of history in an exquisite environment.

There are also great prospects in the field of logistics, as Greece is the only country in the world located at the crossroads of three continents - Africa, Asia, and Europe. When a Chinese company invests in Greece, it immediately acquires access to a market with a population of more than 350 million in southeastern Europe.

Four Chinese banks already directly and indirectly operate in Greece. That makes it much easier for Chinese companies to finance their development plans in the country.

In recent months, we have been cooperating with Chinese companies that want to make Greece the center of their European activities. They recognize that Greece is very friendly to the Chinese and are planning investments in other parts of Europe.

One of the largest potential projects is the transformation of Greece into China's "air hub" for southeastern Europe. The Belt and Road Associates is a consultant on the project and is working to motivate the Greek and Chinese sides to launch four new weekly direct flights from Chinese cities to Athens International Airport. China would thus gain daily access to 350 million citizens in southeastern Europe.

Greek ship owners are also continuing their orders with Chinese shipyards. To date, orders have exceeded \$50 billion.

Greek exporters are gradually beginning to understand the value of China, not only as an importing country but also as a hub for the export of Greek products to Southeast Asia.

The future is bright for relations between the two countries, and we will all help achieve our goals.

*The author is the managing partner of the Belt and Road Associates in Greece*

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/content/1190913.shtml>

## Crisis brings China, EU closer together, say experts

By Cao Desheng | **China Daily** | Updated: 2020-05-06 07:37

As Wednesday marks the 45th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic ties between China and the European Union, experts said the COVID-19 crisis might become a catalyst for them to enhance their cooperation and shape their future relationship.

Cui Hongjian, director of the Department for European Studies at the China Institute of International Studies, said despite any differences that might remain between them, the EU and China should respect and trust each other amid the global pandemic while working together to prevail over the contagion and offset COVID-19's impact on the world economy.

Since the start of the outbreak, the pandemic has brought China and Europe closer together, which has been demonstrated by the mutual support and aid between China and the EU and its members.

President Xi Jinping and Premier Li Keqiang have been in contact with European leaders — including European Council President Charles Michel, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, German Chancellor Angela Merkel and French President Emmanuel Macron — on the outbreak as well as bilateral and international issues.

A report titled "Covid-19 in Europe-China Relations" released on April 29 by the European Think Tank Network on China said the COVID-19 crisis was the first time that China has figured so prominently in an issue of immediate critical importance to European people and governments.

"The way that relations with China evolve over the course of the crisis will likely have a lasting effect on the Europe-China relationship," said the report.

China and the EU both support and uphold multilateralism in addressing global challenges, and through various dialogue mechanisms. They are stepping up cooperation on diagnostics, treatment, pharmaceutical and vaccine development, as well as regular exchanges of information and expertise.

This year was supposed to be a defining year for China-Europe relations as critical decisions are expected to be made on questions such as 5G licensing rules in Europe and a bilateral investment agreement between China and the EU.

Among the important political events involving China and European countries was the Summit between China and Central and Eastern European Countries, which was planned to be held in China in the first half of 2020, but had to be postponed due to the pandemic. Germany had also proposed to hold a summit of China and EU

countries in the second half of the year, and China also planned to host the 22nd China-EU Summit.

In a recent online strategic dialogue with Shada Islam, of the European think tank Friends of Europe, Zhang Ming, head of the Chinese Mission to the EU, said COVID-19 is affecting the schedule of events between China and the EU, but "it does not paralyze our communication, nor undermine our shared commitment to the comprehensive strategic partnership".

"The two sides have been in close contact to prepare for the high-level exchanges for this year. We aim to deliver positive results and bring our relations forward," he said. "On the bright side, the pandemic shows once again that China and the EU should be partners, not rivals."

Zhang said China-EU talks on an investment treaty are proceeding well, and both sides are strongly committed to pushing forward negotiations on the agreement.

"During the crisis, there has been growing talk of de-globalization, decoupling and protectionism. The continuation of the investment treaty talks demonstrates that China and EU are strong advocates for openness and cooperation," he said.

<http://global.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202005/06/WS5eb1f8c4a310a8b2411537ba.html>

# EU ties key for global economy

By CECILY LIU | [China Daily](#) | Updated: 2018-11-23 07:33

## **Experts: Nation should join hands with bloc to safeguard free trade**

Closer collaboration between China and the European Union is crucial to uphold multilateral collaboration frameworks and ensure global economic stability, Chinese and European commentators said.

Their comments come at a time when China is increasingly opening up its market to foreign access and championing global connectivity through the Belt and Road Initiative, despite the growing threat of unilateralism and trade protectionism.

"China and the EU should join hands to cope with new changes in economic globalization by persisting in free trade and multilateralism as the focus," said Chi Fulin, president of the China Institute for Reform and Development.

"Speeding up bilateral and multilateral free trade processes will not only release the huge potential of China-EU cooperation, but also bring good news to economic globalization and the world economy," Chi said. China's efforts to upgrade its manufacturing industries and grow consumption and services sectors provide abundant China-EU collaboration opportunities, he added.

Bernard Dewit, chairman of the Belgian-Chinese Chamber of Commerce, said win-win collaboration opportunities are particularly abundant as China enters the next stage of reform and opening-up, which is also a process of China's further integration into the global economy.

"China and the EU are both strong advocates of free trade. Closer collaboration can foster win-win results for both partners and other economies along the Belt and Road trade routes," he said.

Dewit added that the inaugural China International Import Expo in Shanghai is a particularly good example of China's commitment to liberalization, and the strong attendance at the expo by European companies shows their eagerness to engage in trade opportunities with China.

China is currently the EU's second-biggest trading partner, while the EU is China's biggest trading partner. Bilateral trade in goods rose from \$4 billion in 1978 to \$616.9 billion in 2017, according to Chinese government statistics.

In 2014, President Xi Jinping proposed that the two sides should forge China-EU partnerships for peace, growth, reform and civilization to inject new impetus into China-EU cooperation, during his meeting with Herman Van Rompuy, then president of the European Council. The four principles have since guided the development of China-EU ties.

At the 20th EU-China Summit in July, China and the EU affirmed their commitment to further collaboration to consolidate economic and trade relations and work together on the basis of mutual respect, fairness, justice and win-win cooperation.

Angel Saz-Carranza, director of the ESADE Center for Global Economy and Geopolitics, said the growing threat of protectionism in recent times has made open and collaborative China-EU relations more important. He urged the two governments to work on establishing further clarity in investment rules.

"Currently, several EU states have their own processes to examine and clear foreign investments in certain sectors of national and strategic importance. The EU could consider doing these clearances at a central level to improve efficiency and clarity for investors," Saz-Carranza said.

He added that speeding up negotiations for the bilateral investment agreement, which started in 2013, is also key to providing investors on both sides with predictable, long-term access to each other's markets.

Dewit added that further establishing cultural and education links between China and the EU is also important in ensuring mutual understanding and trust, which creates a foundation for solid business and political partnerships.

This year is China-EU Tourism Year, with both sides staging activities to expand tourism links. These activities already have given tourism flows a boost and benefited more than 16,000 Chinese and European tourism businesses, according to the European Commission.

<http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/201811/23/WS5bf73cd7a310eff30328a822.html>