

Brussels, 28 November 2007

EU and China – a global partnership

The 10th annual EU-China Summit will take place on 28 November in Beijing. The European Commission will be represented by President José Manuel Barroso and Trade Commissioner Peter Mandelson, as well as Joaquin Almunia, Commissioner for Economic and Monetary Affairs. The Chinese delegation will be led by Prime Minister Wen Jiabao. The leaders will discuss the full range of bilateral and international issues, with particular focus on strengthening co-operation of some of today's key global challenges such as climate change and energy security and supporting development in Africa. Apart from discussions on bilateral issues – including the state of play on negotiations for a PCA, and concerns about exchange rate / trade deficit - EU and Chinese leaders will also exchange views on regional and international issues, including Burma/Myanmar, non-proliferation in North Korea and Iran, and the Middle East Peace Process.

On the eve of the summit, President Jose Manuel Barroso said "As the two main global actors, we not only have bilateral interests including trade and investment, but also shared responsibilities to meet global challenges such as climate change, a dynamic and far-reaching multilateral trade system and development cooperation."

Commissioner for External Relations and European Neighbourhood Policy, Benita Ferrero-Waldner said: "Together the EU and China can make a difference in many fields: from global security to addressing climate change. China is changing quickly, and the EU is evolving too. We should continue to join our efforts in the interest of all our people, and work even closer together, for a safer, more stable and peaceful world."

Commissioner Peter Mandelson added: "We need a major change in China's approach to our trading relationship in order to achieve tangible results on market access, IPR enforcement and curbing overcapacity. We do not intend to turn away from dialogue and cooperation. What we will do is treat China as a normal trading partner in the future, especially by enforcing rules where necessary."

At this year's Summit, the EU will take note of progress on the negotiation of a PCA as well as stressing the need for greater reciprocity and balance in the bilateral relationship, including on market access and exchange rates / trade deficit. Discussion will also cover regional and international issues, such as Burma/Myanmar, non-proliferation in North Korea and Iran, Africa and the Middle East Peace Process.

EU-China relations have strengthened considerably in recent years. In 2004, the EU and China agreed to broaden their relationship into a strategic partnership and in January 2007 began negotiation of a new framework agreement. The Partnership and Cooperation Agreement will encompass the full scope of bilateral relations with China, including enhanced co operation in political matters, and will update the existing 1985 Trade and Economic Co operation Agreement. In addition to trade, the agreement will provide a comprehensive framework for the over 20 sectors in which the EU and China already hold dialogues, including energy, the environment, agriculture, transport, customs, education, information society, science and technology, space co operation, and will cover other key issues such as sustainable development, migration, and international challenges such as terrorism and weapons of mass destruction.