Joint Press Statement
Seventeenth EU-Macao Joint Committee Meeting
Brussels, 4 December 2012

The 17th European Union-Macao Joint Committee meeting was held in Brussels on 4 December 2012, in accordance with Article 16 of the Agreement for Trade and Co-operation between the European Economic Community and Macao of 15 December 1992. This was the 11th annual meeting since China’s resumption of the exercise of sovereignty over the Macao Special Administrative Region (SAR). The previous meeting was held in Macao in June 2011.

The Delegation of the European Union (EU) was headed by Mr. Gerhard Sabathil, Director for North East Asia and the Pacific of the European External Action Service; and the Delegation of the Macao SAR was headed by Ms. Florinda da Rosa Silva Chan, Secretary for Administration and Justice. Both sides reiterated their appreciation for the annual bilateral meeting as an effective forum to discuss issues of common interest and ways to further closer co-operation.

During the meeting, the parties reviewed the latest developments in the bilateral relationship and took stock of ongoing bilateral co-operation activities, including in areas identified during the previous meeting.

Macao informed the EU of recent developments in the Special Administrative Region, including the steady growth of its economy in 2012, the Hengqin project, new infrastructure development, the Closer Economic Partnership Arrangement with Mainland China, and efforts towards diversification of the economy.

The EU informed Macao of its latest efforts in addressing the sovereign debt and reforming the banking sector, including through measures aimed at boosting competitiveness and ensuring growth and jobs.
On EU-Macao co-operation, both sides welcomed the satisfactory implementation of the EU-Macao Legal Co-operation Project, aimed at strengthening Macao's legal system and to enhance public administration, legal and judicial expertise, as well as the activities under the EU Business Information Programme, including its business councils. The two sides expressed their satisfaction with the successful launch of the EU Academic Programme in Macao on 15 June 2012, and the EU provided more details on the next steps of the programme. The EU Academic Programme aims at raising awareness and knowledge of the EU in Macao by supporting EU-focused studies and research, academic links and outreach activities. The two sides also welcomed the signature in Macao on 21 November 2012 of the third agreement to promote exchanges and training of interpreters.

Both sides welcomed the adoption of the new copyright code by Macao and Macao’s commitment to block retransmission of pirated signals in all fields, including through application of the criminal sanctions foreseen in the new code.

Finally, the EU and Macao authorities expressed their shared intention to explore new areas of cooperation and to continue to cooperate in areas like environmental protection, cultural and creative exchanges, which have been the subject of initiatives and events involving both sides following the last meeting.