



**EUROPEAN COUNCIL
THE PRESIDENT**



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**Press Statement by
President of the European Council Herman Van Rompuy and
President of the European Commission José Manuel Barroso
following the 15th EU-China Summit**

We welcomed Premier Wen today at the Palais d'Egmont for the 15th Summit between the EU and China - only seven months since we last met in Beijing.

Our relationship is strong and expanding. EU and China are two of the three largest world economies. We are mutually important trading partners. The EU is China's biggest trading partner and China is our second and fastest growing partner. 10% of the world's trade. Our futures are closely linked. And irrespective of all the challenges we are facing, we are certain that our cooperation will greatly contribute to our success.

A successful cooperation means moving forward regularly and engaging on all the issues that matter. Since last February, we have worked hard to translate into reality the commitments we took together in Beijing: the new urbanization partnership has been launched, the "People to People Dialogue" has become the third pillar of our institutional architecture, the annual Strategic Dialogue has opened new areas of cooperation on defence and security, the Human Rights Dialogue was held, agreements in the field of energy have been signed, and important dialogues on cyber issues and on outer space have been launched. We also advanced in our discussions to negotiate a bilateral investment agreement.

Today's Summit has been another important step forward.

P R E S S

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Economic and financial issues in Europe, in China and in the rest of the world were a crucial part of our talks. We have taken the opportunity to explain to Prime Minister Wen our progress in setting up the necessary mechanisms and governance structures to place the European economy on sounder footings. We explained the most recent developments that show that we are on the right track. We mentioned the first signs of the positive impact of the major structural reforms carried out in many Member States; we mentioned the readiness to take short-term measures - as demonstrated by the European Central Bank's recent decisions; and we mentioned the ongoing work to address structural flaws in the euro zone architecture, including our roadmap to complete the Economic and Monetary Union.

We thanked Premier Wen for the support we have received from himself and from the Chinese leadership throughout the euro crisis. We agree that in light of our closer cooperation and increasing economic interdependence the stability and integrity of the euro zone has a positive economic impact also on China. We reiterated our appreciation for China's pledge in Los Cabos of 43 billion US dollars to increase IMF resources and create a credible global firewall.

We have also discussed the different strands of our bilateral cooperation, and dialogues we have together, on trade and investment, and on a better level playing field for commercial relations. Four agreements on innovation, competition, space and low carbon programme, were also signed.

On human rights we recalled that public opinion in Europe follows closely the situation in China as in other parts of the world, and, of course, in Europe itself. We told Premier Wen that the Human Rights Dialogue with China forms an essential part of our relationship. We welcome that after more than one year the Human Rights Dialogue has been resumed. In our view it should deliver more progress on the ground. There is still room for improvement and we need to focus on that.

The EU attaches great importance to the respect for fundamental freedoms in China as in other parts of the world. We recognize the tremendous progress achieved in China by lifting hundreds of millions of people out of poverty. But there are also concerns, in particular regarding restrictions of freedom of expression and the situation in Tibet.

Finally, we discussed some of the most critical regional situations affecting our peace and security, in particular in Syria. We stressed to Premier Wen our great concern for the current escalating crisis, and the importance of us all acting together to help resolve the situation and bring lasting stability and peace to the country and its people. The situation in Syria has developed into a terrible humanitarian tragedy. We have asked China, as permanent member of the Security Council, to redouble its efforts to ensure the United Nations Security Council can contribute effectively to the solution of the Syrian crisis

In conclusion, this Summit was special not only because of the progress we have made. It was also special because was the last one with Premier Wen. He has led the Chinese delegation to EU-China Summits for a decade. He attended his first Summit in 2003 when China and the EU agreed to enter into a "Strategic Partnership". The bilateral relations have benefited enormously from his wisdom and firm commitment to develop a strategic partnership. The Prime Minister oversaw China's incredible transformation, and made an extraordinary contribution to transforming EU-China relations. Prime Minister Wen's legacy is strong and we are sure that he will continue to influence positively our work.

We wished him all the very best for his future.
