



**EUROPEAN COUNCIL
THE PRESIDENT**



Brussels, 20 September 2012
EUCO 171/12
PRESSE 387
PR PCE 146

**Opening remarks by President of the European Council
Herman Van Rompuy
at the 15th EU-China Summit**

Welcome to Brussels for the 15th EU-China Summit at the Palais d'Egmont. I am delighted that we have the opportunity to meet for a second time this year and I welcome also your delegation.

We met only seven months ago for the Summit in Beijing, and I am pleased to see what a full agenda we have in front of us today. EU-China relations have reached such a level of intensity that we have to meet frequently to keep up!

You have witnessed all the developments in our bilateral relations over the last almost ten years. Mister Prime minister, your role has been essential in bringing us where we are today. Since the EU and China signed the Strategic Partnership in 2003 not only the bilateral trade has more than quadrupled, but also our interaction has expanded to cover new areas. We have reached a level of mutual understanding and respect that provides a very solid base to strengthen further our partnership and to address also the differences that exist between the EU and China.

In the last decade the world has been confronted with many challenges, particularly in the last four years when an unprecedented economic and financial crisis has required all our attention and efforts. Our relationship has emerged stronger from this challenge. We have recognised the level of interdependence that binds us. We have also learned that we need to address together global challenges, if we want to ensure a brighter future for our peoples, and for the world at large.

P R E S S

Dirk De Backer - Spokesperson of the President - ☎ +32 (0)2 281 9768 - +32 (0)497 59 99 19
press.president@consilium.europa.eu <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/>

EUCO 171/12

1
EN

Today we will focus on our bilateral relations, the state of the world economy, our cooperation on climate negotiations and on the G20 agenda; and on some of the most relevant international and regional issues that threaten peace and stability.

I am looking forward to having a positive and constructive discussion with you. I am confident that this Summit will contribute to the further consolidation of our Strategic Partnership.
