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Press release | 20.09.2012

EU-China Summit

EU should promote partnership but not dodge the difficult issues

On the occasion of the 15th EU-China Summit held in Brussels, **Reinhard Bütikofer**, vice-president of the Greens/EFA group in the European Parliament, and **Helga Trüpel**, member of the EU-China delegation of the European Parliament, declare:

"Dialogue and cooperation between the world's first and the world's third economic powers, namely the EU and China, are essential across a wide range of issues. The agenda for the EU-China exchange is very long and contains many important topics. However, the dialogue is only of use if both sides are frank and do not refrain from tackling more difficult aspects of the relationship.

"The cancellation of the scheduled press conference is embarrassing and it is unfortunate that the EU could not find a way to avoid this. The communication that the EU leaders have circulated ahead of the summit itself does not bode well.

"Regrettably, it seems the EU does not intend to raise the issue of human rights in the exchange. Instead, the issue is being confined to the EU-China Human Rights Dialogue that has been very unsatisfactory, particularly at the last meeting in May. It is unfortunate that Council president Van Rompuy and Commission president Barroso are either too polite, too timid or too enthralled by the hope of securing Chinese support for Europe's economic problems to openly raise some contentious issues in the EU-China relationship.

"Sustainable development is being mentioned as a pertinent issue, but it remains unclear whether the conflict on the inclusion of aviation in the EU's emissions trading scheme will at all be discussed.

"International security cooperation certainly is an important dimension of the EU-China partnership but the present tensions around East Asian maritime issues are not even explicitly mentioned in the EU's public announcement regarding the topics of the dialogue.

"Trade and investment between China and the EU is important but the EU should clearly address problems in that regard, including issues concerning trade in raw materials, public procurement and Chinese investment in Europe.

"Maybe Mr Van Rompuy and Mr Barroso want to address these issues in their conversations, but feel they should not let the public have any expectations. In that case they should be reminded of a famous Chinese saying: 'be open and above board'."

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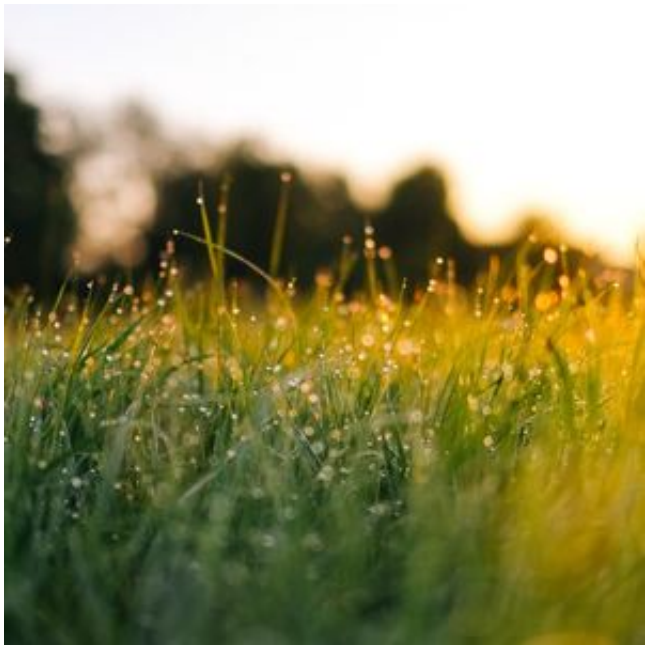
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