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Press release | 22.03.2021

Greens/EFA welcome targeted sanctions against Chinese officials & others

China

Today, European Union Foreign Ministers have adopted targeted sanctions against Chinese officials in response to ongoing human rights abuses, internment and forced labour of more than one million Uighurs in China's Xinjiang Autonomous Region and for restrictions on freedoms in Hong Kong. The updated list of sanctions now also includes individuals from North Korea, Russia, Libya and elsewhere.

Reinhard Bütikofer MEP, Chair of the European Parliament's China Delegation, welcomes the targeted sanctions:

"Targeted sanctions are the right step to put the Chinese leadership in its place for human rights abuses against the Uighur population in Xinjiang. EU Foreign Ministers have finally decided to go beyond mere condemnations for the human rights violations and restrictions against the democratic rights of Hong Kong. These sanctions must be followed up with clear and coherent actions across other policy areas such as trade.

"We demand that the investment agreement currently being negotiated with China must contain clear commitments to ratify international conventions against forced labour. European companies must not continue to benefit from forced labour and must break off business relations with Chinese partners if they manufacture their products in labour camps."

Heidi Hautala MEP, Greens/EFA MEP and Vice-President of the Parliament Responsible for Human Rights, comments:

"We welcome the fact that the EU's new sanctions mechanism is being used as it is intended: To call out and punish those responsible for human rights violations. We call for the swift sanctioning of further perpetrators of the most serious human rights violations. It is an important signal that the violence against peaceful protesters and against the Rohingya in Myanmar will be sanctioned. Now it must be the turn of others responsible for the most serious human rights violations, such as those behind the murder of Jamal Khashoggi.

"This instrument should be used to its fullest: Cases of gender-based violence such as systematic rape in the context of wars and environmental crimes committed by companies must also be sanctioned. Those who

violate human rights must be held accountable. We demand a right of co-decision for the European Parliament and the involvement of civil society."

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