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*Plenary sitting*

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**A9-0375/2023**

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# REPORT

on a European Parliament recommendation to the Council and the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy concerning EU-China relations  
(2023/2127(INI))

Committee on Foreign Affairs

Rapporteur: Hilde Vautmans

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## **DRAFT EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT RECOMMENDATION**

**to the Council and the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy concerning EU-China relations (2023/2127(INI))**

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to the European Council conclusions on China of 30 June 2023,
- having regard to the joint communication from the Commission and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy of 12 March 2019 entitled ‘EU-China – A strategic outlook’ (JOIN(2019)0005),
- having regard to the EU strategy for cooperation in the Indo-Pacific from 16 September 2021 and the EU Strategy on Central Asia from 17 June 2019,
- having regard to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Paris Climate Agreement, which entered into force on 4 November 2016,
- having regard to the Sino-British Joint Declaration of 1984 and the Sino-Portuguese Joint Declaration of 1987,
- having regard to the Council conclusions of 28 July 2020 on Hong Kong,
- having regard to the speeches by President Ursula von der Leyen on de-risking at the European Policy Centre on 30 March 2023 and at the European Parliament on 18 April 2023,
- having regard to the joint communication of the Commission and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy of 20 June 2023 entitled ‘On “European Economic Security Strategy”’ (JOIN(2023)0020),
- having regard to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights treaties and instruments, in particular the 1948 UN Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide,
- having regard to the 2014 Protocol to the 1930 International Labour Organization (ILO) Forced Labour Convention, which China has not signed,
- having regard to its position of 3 October 2023 on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the protection of the Union and its Member States from economic coercion by third countries<sup>1</sup>,
- having regard to its previous resolutions on the human rights situation in China, in particular that of 17 December 2020 on forced labour and the situation of the Uyghurs

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<sup>1</sup> Texts adopted, P9\_TA(2023)0333.

in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region<sup>2</sup>, of 18 April 2019 on China, notably the situation of religious and ethnic minorities<sup>3</sup>, and of 4 October 2018 on the mass arbitrary detention of Uyghurs and Kazakhs in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region<sup>4</sup>,

- having regard to its resolutions of 19 December 2019 on the situation of the Uyghurs in China (China Cables)<sup>5</sup>, of 5 May 2022 on the reports of continued organ harvesting in China<sup>6</sup>, of 9 June 2022 on the human rights situation in Xinjiang, including the Xinjiang police files<sup>7</sup>, and of 15 December 2022 on the Chinese Government crackdown on the peaceful protests across the People's Republic of China<sup>8</sup>,
- having regard to its previous resolutions and recommendations on Hong Kong, in particular its resolution of 19 June 2020 on the PRC national security law for Hong Kong and the need for the EU to defend Hong Kong's high degree of autonomy<sup>9</sup>, and its recommendation of 13 December 2017 to the Council, the Commission and the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy on Hong Kong, 20 years after handover<sup>10</sup>,
- having regard to its resolution of 20 May 2021 on Chinese countersanctions on EU entities and MEPs and MPs<sup>11</sup>,
- having regard to the Commission recommendation of 3 October 2023 on critical technology areas for the EU's economic security for further risk assessment with Member States (C(2023)6689),
- having regard to its resolution of 16 September 2021 on a new EU-China strategy<sup>12</sup>,
- having regard to the bilateral agreement on cooperation on global ocean governance, known as the 'EU-China Ocean Partnership', signed by the EU and the People's Republic of China on 16 July 2018,
- having regard to its resolution of 1 June 2023 on foreign interference in all democratic processes in the European Union, including disinformation<sup>13</sup>,
- having regard to the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS),
- having regard to its resolutions of 18 July 2019 on the situation in Hong Kong<sup>14</sup>, of

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<sup>2</sup> OJ C 445, 29.10.2021, p. 114.

<sup>3</sup> OJ C 158, 30.4.2021, p. 2.

<sup>4</sup> OJ C 11, 13.1.2020, p. 25.

<sup>5</sup> OJ C 255, 29.6.2021, p. 60.

<sup>6</sup> OJ C 465, 6.12.2022, p. 117.

<sup>7</sup> OJ C 493, 27.12.2022, p. 96.

<sup>8</sup> OJ C 177, 17.5.2023, p. 95.

<sup>9</sup> OJ C 362, 8.9.2021, p. 71.

<sup>10</sup> OJ C 369, 11.10.2018, p. 156.

<sup>11</sup> OJ C 15, 12.1.2022, p. 17.

<sup>12</sup> OJ C 117, 11.3.2022, p. 40.

<sup>13</sup> Texts adopted, P9\_TA(2023)0219.

<sup>14</sup> OJ C 165, 4.5.2021, p. 2.

21 January 2021 on the crackdown on the democratic opposition in Hong Kong<sup>15</sup>, of 8 July 2021 on Hong Kong, notably the case of Apple Daily<sup>16</sup>, of 20 January 2022 on violations of fundamental freedoms in Hong Kong<sup>17</sup>, of 7 July 2022 on the arrest of Cardinal Zen and the trustees of the 612 Humanitarian Relief Fund in Hong Kong<sup>18</sup>, and of 15 June 2023 on the deterioration of fundamental freedoms in Hong Kong, notably the case of Jimmy Lai<sup>19</sup>,

- having regard to its resolution of 1 June 2023 on foreign interference in all democratic processes in the European Union, including disinformation<sup>20</sup>, and to its resolution of 13 July 2023 on recommendations for reform of the European Parliament’s rules on transparency, integrity, accountability and anti-corruption<sup>21</sup>,
- having regard to its recommendation of 21 October 2021 to the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy on EU-Taiwan political relations and cooperation<sup>22</sup> and to its resolution of 15 September 2022 on the situation in the Strait of Taiwan<sup>23</sup>,
- having regard to the ‘Strategic Compass for Security and Defence – For a European Union that protects its citizens, values and interests and contributes to international peace and security’, approved by the Council on 21 March 2022 and endorsed by the European Council on 25 March 2022,
- having regard to Directive (EU) 2022/2557 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 December 2022 on the resilience of critical entities and repealing Council Directive 2008/114/EC<sup>24</sup>,
- having regard to the joint communication from the Commission and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy of 1 December 2021 entitled ‘The Global Gateway’ (JOIN(2021)0030),
- having regard to the Versailles Declaration, adopted at the informal meeting of the Heads of State or Government on 11 March 2022,
- having regard to the report of its Committee on Foreign Affairs on the security and defence implications of Chinese influence on critical infrastructure in the European Union,
- having regard to the joint communication from the Commission and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy of 22 June 2016 entitled ‘Elements for a new EU strategy on China’ (JOIN(2016)0030),

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<sup>15</sup> OJ C 456, 10.11.2021, p. 242.

<sup>16</sup> OJ C 99, 1.3.2022, p. 178.

<sup>17</sup> OJ C 336, 2.9.2022, p. 2.

<sup>18</sup> OJ C 47, 7.2.2023, p. 202.

<sup>19</sup> Texts adopted, P9\_TA(2023)0242.

<sup>20</sup> Texts adopted, P9\_TA(2023)0219.

<sup>21</sup> Texts adopted, P9\_TA(2023)0292.

<sup>22</sup> OJ C 184, 5.5.2022, p. 170.

<sup>23</sup> OJ C 125, 5.4.2023, p. 149.

<sup>24</sup> OJ L 333, 27.12.2002, p. 164.

- having regard to the United Nations General Assembly resolutions on Russia’s war of aggression against Ukraine, in particular the resolution of 23 February 2023 entitled ‘Principles of the Charter of the United Nations underlying a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in Ukraine’ and the resolution of 1 March 2022 on the aggression against Ukraine,
  - having regard to the Council Recommendation of 8 December 2022 on a Union-wide coordinated approach to strengthen the resilience of critical infrastructure<sup>25</sup>,
  - having regard to the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a framework for ensuring a secure and sustainable supply of critical raw materials and amending Regulations (EU) 168/2013, (EU) 2018/858, 2018/1724 and (EU) 2019/102 (COM(2023)0160),
  - having regard to the EU toolbox for 5G security of 29 January 2020,
  - having regard to the proposal for a regulation of 14 September 2022 of the European Parliament and of the Council on prohibiting products made with forced labour on the Union market (COM(2022)0453),
  - having regard to the proposal for a directive of 23 February 2022 of the European Parliament and of the Council on Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence and amending Directive (EU) 2019/1937 (COM(2022)0071),
  - having regard to Rule 118 of its Rules of Procedure,
  - having regard to the report of the Committee on Foreign Affairs (A9-0375/2023),
- A. whereas the People’s Republic of China (PRC) is simultaneously a partner and also increasingly a competitor and systemic rival to the EU; whereas China is, of its own accord, clearly shifting the core of our relations towards systemic rivalry; whereas this competition and rivalry is not sought by the EU; whereas the EU’s policy has been, and should continue to be, guided by the principle of cooperating where possible, competing when needed and confronting where necessary; whereas China is rapidly becoming the dominant regional and global power; whereas this has fundamental implications for the EU’s role in the global economy and the EU’s security; whereas a common EU policy towards China will determine the EU’s future in global affairs;
- B. whereas the Chinese Government is strengthening its role and influence in international institutions and has both the intention and, at the same time the economic, technological and military means to reshape the international rules-based order; whereas, as a permanent Member of the United Nations Security Council, China must assume its responsibilities and uphold a rules-based international order, multilateralism and global governance;
- C. whereas both the European Union and China have an interest in pursuing active and stable relations; whereas the EU wishes these relations to be built on the pillars of

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<sup>25</sup> OJ C 20, 20.1.2023, p. 1.

respect for international law and on the principle of balanced reciprocal engagement and shared global responsibilities; whereas engagement with China is important to address global challenges;

- D. whereas the ruling Chinese Communist Party (CCP) does not share the same values as European democracies, has become increasingly authoritarian domestically and promotes governance models internationally that contradict the EU's values; whereas the promotion and protection of human rights, democracy and the rule of law should remain at the centre of the relationship between the EU and China, in line with the EU's commitment to upholding these fundamental principles in all areas of its external action; whereas freedom of religion and belief is continuing to deteriorate across mainland China, with the CCP requiring all religions to adhere to the party's ideology, doctrine, and teachings;
- E. whereas China committed to the 'one country, two systems' principle by signing the Sino-British Joint Declaration and the Sino-Portuguese Joint Declaration pertaining to the governance of the special administrative regions of Hong Kong and Macau; whereas the PRC has dismantled democracy in Hong Kong and Macau, and has cracked down on political opposition and pro-democracy activists and their family members in Hong Kong, Macau and abroad; whereas since the PRC imposed the National Security Law (NSL) on 30 June 2020, fundamental freedoms, the rule of law and the judiciary's independence in Hong Kong have deteriorated alarmingly; whereas the PRC has fully violated the 'one country, two systems' principle, the Sino-British and Sino-Portuguese Joint Declarations and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights;
- F. whereas China is moving into a new era of security and control characterised by an increasingly assertive economic and foreign policy, employing grey-zone activities, including military exercises, economic coercion, cyber warfare and information manipulation and seeks to change the international rules-based order;
- G. whereas the EU can only credibly defend its interests and values against an increasingly assertive China if it acts with a single, united and determined approach and remains consistent with its message; whereas the activities of some Member States, which may run counter to the provisions of Article 24 of the Treaty on European Union, are of concern;
- H. whereas in order to defend its core values and be treated as an equal partner, Europe needs a new approach towards China based on European open strategic autonomy, reciprocity and cooperation with like-minded partners, backed up by the necessary legislative and non-legislative instruments to defend itself against coercion;
- I. whereas the EU must not accept critical political or military support by China for Russia's illegal war of aggression against Ukraine; whereas China has still not recognised the Russian invasion into Ukraine as a full-scale war of aggression and plays a vital role in the circumvention and mitigation of EU sanctions imposed against Russia; whereas the Joint Statement of the Russian Federation and the People's Republic of China on the International Relations Entering a New Era and the Global Sustainable Development was signed on 4 February 2022, just before the start of the illegal Russian invasion of Ukraine; whereas the manner in which China engages with Russia will also

shape the future of EU-China relations;

- J. whereas in its resolution of 23 February 2023, the UN General Assembly called for the ending of the war in Ukraine and demanded Russia's immediate withdrawal from Ukraine in line with the UN Charter; whereas China abstained on the vote on this resolution; whereas China voted in favour of a United Nations resolution that explicitly acknowledges 'the aggression by the Russian Federation against Ukraine' on 26 April 2023;
- K. whereas the EU opposes any unilateral change to the status quo in the Taiwan Strait, particularly by force, and must work with its partners in strengthening deterrence capacities against any such attempts by the PRC; whereas the EU is concerned at grey-zone activities, such as provocative military behaviour, economic coercion and cyberattacks, and opposes ongoing grave human rights violations within China, in particular in Xinjiang, Tibet, Inner Mongolia and Hong Kong and Macao, and must stand in solidarity with those facing human rights abuses;
- L. whereas the EU and the PRC signed a bilateral agreement in 2018, known as the Blue Partnership, which aims to improve cooperation on global ocean governance;
- M. whereas the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress of the People's Republic of China revised its Maritime Traffic Laws (Maritime Traffic Laws Revision 2021), which have been enforced since 1 September 2021; whereas China's expansionist policies and behaviour constituting harassment in the South China Sea demonstrate a flagrant disregard for UNCLOS and the freedom of navigation; whereas Chinese unilateral efforts to control contested areas of the South China and East China Seas are not acceptable; whereas the Chinese Ministry of Natural Resources published its so-called standard map; whereas China's renaming of Russian locations on its 'standard map' is noted;
- N. whereas in recent decades, China has grown its presence in almost every African country, which China uses to increase its international influence and secure its economic interests, particularly access to Africa's vast natural resources and huge market; whereas Chinese investments and loans in Africa and beyond are not subject to good governance or respect for human rights;
- O. whereas the Chinese Government is implementing increasingly oppressive domestic policies, repressing any form of dissent, cracking down on all civil and political freedoms and targeting ethnic and religious minorities, such as Tibetans and the Uyghur population, particularly harshly;
- P. whereas the UN Committee Against Torture and the UN Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment have expressed concern over the allegations of forced organ harvesting from prisoners, and have called on the Government of the PRC to increase the accountability and transparency of the organ transplant system and punish those responsible for abuses;
- Q. whereas several high-ranking EU delegations met with their Chinese counterparts in 2023, including former Vice-President of the Commission Frans Timmermans, who attended the EU-China High-Level Environment and Climate Dialogue in Beijing on



4 July; Vice-President of the Commission Věra Jourová, who attended the High-Level Digital Dialogue in Beijing on 18 September; Commissioner Virginijus Sinkevičius, who took part in the first High-Level Dialogue on Circular Economy in Beijing on 22 September; Vice-President of the Commission Valdis Dombrovskis, who co-chaired the 10th EU-China High-Level Economic and Trade Dialogue together with Chinese Vice-Premier of the State Council, He Lifeng, on 25 September; Commissioner Kadri Simson, who participated in the 11th EU-China Energy Dialogue in Beijing on 12 October; Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Josep Borrell, who met with the Director of the Office of the Central Foreign Affairs Commission and Minister of Foreign Affairs of China, Wang Yi, during the 12th EU-China Strategic Dialogue on 13 October in Beijing; and Commissioner Thierry Breton, who met with Chinese Vice-Premier Zhang Guoqing in Beijing on 10 November; whereas rebalancing the EU-China economic and trade relationship, and market access and supply chain issues were discussed among other issues during these meetings;

- R. whereas the current strategy for relations between the EU and China dates back to 2016, and was last updated in 2019, so it would be advisable to carry out a review and update of it in light of the new geopolitical context;
1. Recommends that the Council and the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy:

***Engaging China to tackle global challenges***

- (a) continue engaging pragmatically with China to tackle global challenges such as climate change, the protection of biodiversity, challenges to human health and pandemic preparedness, food security, the reduction of the risk of disasters, debt relief for the Global South, financial stability and humanitarian assistance, and increase effective dialogue with China and like-minded partners on security issues in view of China's increasingly critical role in global peace and stability, particularly in the light of Russia's unprovoked war of aggression against Ukraine, but also in other conflict regions such as the Korean Peninsula or the Middle East;
- (b) demand that China uphold the rules-based international order, especially the universal principles of human rights, the UN Charter, including respect for the territorial integrity and the sovereignty of all states, and respect international law, organisations and treaties;
- (c) maintain diplomatic engagement while increasing the EU's assertiveness towards China in order to assume its responsibility as a permanent member of the UN Security Council; in this context, further engage China, aiming to stop Chinese support to Russia's military aggression and China's aiding the circumvention of EU sanctions against Russia, and remind China of its own declared commitment to play a constructive role in ending Russia's illegal aggression against Ukraine, which encompasses Russia's immediate, full and unconditional withdrawal of its troops from Ukraine;
- (d) reiterate that China, as the world's largest carbon emitter, must adhere to its own

promises and act in line with the Paris Agreement by peaking its CO<sub>2</sub> emissions before 2030 and by participating, proportionally to its economic power, in efforts to financially support poorer countries affected by the negative consequences of climate change in the context of the Loss and Damage Fund; encourage Member States to work with China to bring their mutual policies into line with their international commitments and stress that joint efforts with global partners are needed to tackle a global problem;

- (e) intensify, together with China, dialogue and close cooperation in the fight against illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and, more generally, with regard to the sustainable use of marine biological resources and ocean governance;
- (f) insist that China plays a constructive role in multilateral organisations, where China is strengthening its role and is actively attempting to reshape norms, such as the World Trade Organization, the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations;
- (g) respond adequately to China's increasing efforts to change the multilateral rules-based order, through tools such as the BRICS group, the Belt and Road Initiative, etc., by ensuring better coordination among the EU Member States, by drafting a viable strategy towards the countries of the Global South, and through engagement with partners around the world, based on multilateralism and the values of the UN Charter, and by increasing the EU's presence in the Global South, namely through its Global Gateway strategy, to create alternative secure infrastructure to China's Belt and Road Initiative;

#### ***Opposing China's human rights violations***

- (h) insist that China, as a member of the UN and as a signatory of nine human rights treaties under the UN, will be held accountable for its increasing human rights violations and efforts to undermine the rules-based order and fulfil its obligations and commitments under international law by respecting universal human rights and the rule of law, according to international standards; to allow independent monitoring of the human rights situation, including by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights; to this end, take seriously into account the obligations relating to business and human rights under international law, in particular the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, as well as European rules on due diligence and the prohibition of goods made using forced labour; intensify the Human Rights Dialogue with China with a view to bringing genuine improvements and include Members of the European Parliament in this dialogue; furthermore, develop a results-oriented EU strategy for human rights in China articulating the use of all areas and instruments of EU external action; point out that the European External Action Service (EEAS) and EU Member States should address China's increasing human rights relativism and the use of its influence in multilateral organisations to alter the paradigm on fundamental human rights; express regret of the Chinese membership in the UN Human Rights Council;
- (i) ensure a unified European response when China uses its economic leverage to

silence opposition against its human rights abuses; coordinate its responses with international like-minded partners;

- (j) call on the Chinese authorities to take necessary actions to stop grave human rights violations, as highlighted in the 2022 report by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, as well as end other measures that discriminate or inflict harm against minority groups, such as forced labour and political re-education, which include arbitrary and discriminatory detention of members of Uyghur and other predominantly Muslim groups; urge a proper implementation of the recommendations of the independent and impartial UN assessment of human rights violations in China, in particular in Xinjiang; call for the EU to urge China to allow the UN to carry out an investigation to take place in Tibet and Hong Kong; urge the Chinese authorities to grant meaningful access to the regions concerned and immediately and unconditionally release the Uyghur scholar and 2019 Sakharov Prize Laureate Ilham Tohti and all other activists imprisoned and tortured because of regime opposition; more generally, urge the termination of systemic repression, the closure of all detention camps and the lifting of sanctions and release of all political prisoners and human rights defenders detained in China; condemn the use of death penalty; recall that the total estimated number of executions in China exceeds all other countries that apply capital punishment in 2022; urge China to create full transparency on the judicial processes and on the total number of executions; further increase the EU's diplomatic efforts to demand the abolition of the death penalty in China; urge the EU and the Member States to offer support to human rights and democracy activists in China;
- (k) insist that China respect and guarantee the right to freedom of religion or belief and refrain from monitoring, harassing, detaining or otherwise intimidating leaders and members of religious groups, both online and offline; condemn continuous actions to restrict religious activities in China and, in this context, particularly the new legislation on Administrative Measures for Religious Activity Venues, which aims to increase party-state oversight of such activities and introducing propaganda elements into religious content, as well as the forced affiliation of bishops with the CCP-controlled Chinese Patriotic Catholic Association;
- (l) call on the Chinese authorities to immediately terminate the practice of family separation in Tibet and forced assimilation at residential schools, as highlighted by UN experts in February 2023 and condemn Chinese assimilationist policies in Tibet that violate the educational, religious, cultural and linguistic rights of the Tibetan people and threaten ultimately to eradicate Tibetan culture and identity, in particular the compulsory boarding school and pre-school system which separates over 1 million Tibetan children from their families and enforces Chinese-language education; urge China to immediately abolish the boarding school and pre-school system imposed on Tibetan children, to allow private Tibetan schools to be established and to ensure that Mandarin is not the only language of instruction in Tibet; consider adopting sanctions against the Chinese officials responsible for designing and implementing the boarding school and pre-school system in Tibet; urge the Chinese authorities to provide information about the nine environmental

human rights defenders who have been arrested in recent years after they protested against illegal mining activities; call on the Chinese authorities to allow international and independent observers to access Tibet;

- (m) insist that China follow-up on the recommendations of the UN Human Rights Committee, the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the UN Commission on the Status of Women regarding violations of rights and freedoms, and breaches of international legal obligations in China, in particular in Xinjiang, Tibet and Hong Kong;
- (n) address the systematic use of forced labour by China in Xinjiang and Tibet by working with the private sector to diversify supply chains and welcome the Commission proposal for a regulation to prohibit products made using forced labour, including child labour, on the internal market of the European Union; urge the EU co-legislators to speed up the process to come to an agreement as a matter of urgency and before the end of the current parliamentary term;
- (o) reiterate its position that the credible evidence about birth prevention measures and the separation of Uyghur children from their families amount to crimes against humanity; call on the Chinese authorities to put an immediate end to any measures aimed at preventing births in the Uyghur population; adopt additional sanctions targeting high-ranking PRC officials as well as other individuals and entities involved in the systematic human rights violations and crimes against humanity in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region;
- (p) address individual cases of European citizens, including dual nationals, imprisoned in China, such as the Swedish bookseller Gui Minhai, and use all diplomatic channels to pressure for their release;
- (q) fully implement the Council conclusions on Hong Kong of 24 July 2020; and ensure adequate resources for the European Union Office to Hong Kong (EU Office), so that it can continue conducting prison visits, trial observations and human rights monitoring, by releasing public statements, appointing a human rights focal point among its staff for human rights defenders and raising their cases with the authorities at all levels; calls on the EEAS and the EU Office to report regularly on the most prominent trials, as well as on the evolution of the human rights situation in Hong Kong more generally;
- (r) closely monitor the trials of political prisoners in Hong Kong and call for their release, including the former elected legislators who were arrested and imprisoned for holding a primary election campaign in 2020;
- (s) show solidarity with civil society across mainland China, Hong Kong and Macao, and speed up the implementation of the European human rights framework with the EU global human rights sanction regime in close collaboration with international partners, including the freezing of foreign assets and visa restrictions against those involved in human rights abuses, including political decision makers in Xinjiang, Tibet and Hong Kong;
- (t) identify and close down any avenues that currently facilitate transnational

repression, including through digital means, by China in the European Union and, in particular, those targeting diaspora communities through so-called police stations, in cooperation and coordination with like-minded partners;

- (u) actively work to counteract foreign interference and implement the recommendations and suggested initiatives referred to in the different resolutions of the European Parliament related to foreign interference in all democratic processes in the European Union, including disinformation;
- (v) assess the autonomous status of Hong Kong and Macao in the light of the National Security Law, which should be repealed, and the PRC's violation of its international commitments, its breaches of the Sino-British Joint Declaration and the Sino-Portuguese Joint Declaration, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the 'one country, two systems' principle, the Hong Kong Basic Law and the crackdown on the special administrative regions' autonomy and opposition figures, including members of civil society and their family members; work towards ensuring media freedom in Hong Kong, which is under threat following the imposition of the National Security Law; review the agreement between the EU and Hong Kong/China on cooperation and mutual administrative assistance in customs matters, the status of the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in Brussels, and Hong Kong's seat in the World Trade Organization;
- (w) condemn attempts by the Chinese authorities to target Chinese diaspora communities within the EU, through the so-called Chinese overseas police service stations in the EU, which should unconditionally be closed down, and call on the Member States which have not yet done so to suspend all extradition treaties with the PRC, Hong Kong and Macau, and to protect individuals who are being harassed and persecuted in the EU and those at risk of extradition, and consider lifeboat and other visa schemes for the Hong Kong diaspora;
- (x) condemn the practice of the Chinese authorities of returning individuals to a country where they risk being tortured, in particular with regard to the forced return of people to North Korea, in the light of the UN Security Council discussion on human rights violations in North Korea; remind Chinese counterparts of their UN legal obligation to refrain from doing so;
- (y) ensure a united European approach on cultural and academic cooperation with China, while preventing undue influence from Chinese sources of finance, including by investigating the status of research cooperation between EU and Chinese institutions and making sure that this cooperation is not used as a foreign interference mechanism by the PRC; express grave concern about the accusations of the misuse of Confucius Institutes as platforms to spread propaganda, to censor all debate about topics deemed 'politically sensitive' by the Chinese Government, and to spy on students and the Chinese diaspora abroad; evaluate the impact of Chinese Government interference in the exercise of academic freedom in European educational institutions and campuses;
- (z) encourage more interparliamentary coordination with EU Member States' parliaments on China and make full use of parliamentary diplomacy, especially

with countries in the Global South and strengthen the EU's parliamentary partnership with like-minded partners; ensure the reliable and regular flow of information between the various EU institutions on meetings with Chinese representatives on both the administrative and the political levels;

***De-risking from China to ensure Europe's open strategic autonomy***

- (aa) work closely towards fostering unity among the Member States' approaches towards China and strengthen the EU's strategic autonomy to ensure that Europe is able to defend its values and economic interests, as well as the global rules-based order;
- (ab) work towards a renewed, assertive and coherent EU approach towards China that shapes relations with the PRC in the interest of the EU as a whole and takes full account of the challenges stemming from the PRC's rise as a global actor and its increasingly oppressive domestic policies, assertive foreign policy, use of economic coercion as a means to reach its objectives, including towards Member States, such as in the case of Lithuania, and the challenge this poses to democracies around the world;
- (ac) advance the European Union's stated goal of de-risking trade flows with the PRC to reinforce the EU's open strategic autonomy without aiming to decouple or turning inwards; highlight the importance of reciprocal and balanced trade relations, whereby economic diplomacy addresses the structural shortcomings of the Chinese market, such as a lack of data protection and forced technology transfers, in order to improve fair conditions and market access for European companies; address the risks created by China's acquisition of critical infrastructure in the Member States and in the EU neighbourhood; effectively implement the tools to prevent sensitive technologies from being leaked and used for military purposes, and raise awareness of China's military-civil fusion strategy;
- (ad) swiftly implement, in this context, the European Economic Security Strategy to foster economic resilience underpinned by a solid risk-assessment tool and make better use of our existing trade instruments to minimise the detrimental effects of de-risking on the European economy, deter China from engaging in unfair practices and to ensure close alignment with like-minded partners around the world, such as our transatlantic partners and partners in the Indo-Pacific;
- (ae) work towards a more coordinated approach towards the protection of critical infrastructure at EU level to limit control by China, countering acts of hybrid tactics such as cyberattacks, disinformation campaigns, surveillance of the Chinese diaspora and espionage originating from China and taking place within the European Union, thinking in terms of security beyond economic interests and working with partners to ensure a global, open, free, stable and secure cyberspace, and continue to counter malicious behaviour by enhancing cybersecurity; increase resources for the EU and its Member States to defend against the PRC's cyberespionage activities against EU Member States and demand from China that it stop these activities; work with NATO and like-minded partners to reduce the



risks of espionage and interference in critical infrastructure, in particular infrastructure with a military function; call for the EU institutions to terminate any research funding to Chinese companies active in the areas of critical and strategic importance for the EU;

- (af) ensure greater coordination and cooperation with like-minded partners on issues of common concern to address the multi-dimensional challenge posed by China, especially but not exclusively on issues such as strategic dependencies, economic coercion, political interference and disinformation, and to promote rules-based multilateralism and strategic solidarity between democracies;
- (ag) highlight that the EU's 'One China policy' remains the foundation of our engagement with both the PRC and Taiwan; further highlight the positive effect and strategic importance of deepening ties between the EU and Taiwan, which is a reliable and valued partner playing an indispensable role as a technology and trade partner; coordinate, in this regard, with the EU's global partners;
- (ah) uphold the EU's engagement policy with Taiwan in order to intensify cooperation and continue supporting democracy there; encourage further exchanges between the European Parliament and its Taiwanese interlocutors in this context, as well as cooperation between the EU, Member States and Taiwan on issues of common interest; support steps towards allowing Taiwan's meaningful participation in the meetings, mechanism and activities of relevant international institutions such as the WHO, the International Civil Aviation Organization and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, while remaining in line with the EU's 'One China Policy';
- (ai) ensure clear and consistent signalling by the EU and its Member States that its position on the EU's 'One China policy' has not changed and that any attempt to unilaterally change the status quo in the Taiwan Strait, particularly by means of force or coercion, cannot be accepted and will have high costs; support initiatives aimed at promoting dialogue, cooperation and confidence-building between the two sides; prepare a scenario-based strategy for tackling potential security challenges in the Taiwan Strait and work together with regional partners to prevent any unilateral change to the status quo by taking concrete steps to discourage China from escalating tensions in the region, including through increasing Coordinated Maritime Presences in the Taiwan Strait, facilitating Taiwan's security resilience and considering economic sanction packages in the event of Chinese aggression;
- (aj) condemn China's increasing military provocation around the Taiwan Strait and oppose China's constant distortion of UN Resolution 2758 (XXVI) by demanding that Taiwanese passport holders, including journalists, NGO workers and political activists be barred from accessing tours and events in the UN;
- (ak) increase the EU's economic and diplomatic presence throughout the Indo-Pacific region and recall that the world's strategic and economic centre of gravity is shifting to this region, and that the EU therefore has a clear interest in forging a credible EU-level approach to the Indo-Pacific; underline the importance of

freedom of navigation to be respected by China, including in the South and East China Seas; work with China and the EU's regional partners to ensure freedom of navigation and open and unrestricted shipping lanes, and encourage Member States to explore forms of cooperation, including military cooperation, with regional and global partners to ensure freedom of navigation in the South China and East China Seas and deter any attempts at limiting freedom of navigation; stress that the EEAS, together with EU Member States, should reject China's unlawful and unreasonable claims in the South China and East China Seas and any unilateral attempts at controlling contested areas and territories;

- (al) strengthen the work of the EEAS Strategic Communication division on tackling foreign information manipulation and interference by state actors such as China; point out that these efforts must be allocated sufficient resources, given the scale of the problem and its detrimental effects on the EU and its Member States' political systems; work with the Commission to encourage and coordinate actions aimed at countering China's foreign financing of our democratic processes and China's malign influence, including the strategy of elite capture and the technique of co-opting top-level civil servants and former EU politicians; strengthen expertise and language capacity with regard to China in the EEAS, in Member States and in the EU institutions in general to make use of open-source intelligence;
  - (am) fully leverage the Global Gateway strategy as a tool to intensify the EU's engagement in global development efforts and business relations with partners from developing countries to provide an alternative to Chinese-driven foreign investment strategies; intensify cooperation with international financial institutions and the private sector to mobilise the necessary funding;
  - (an) strengthen cooperation between national intelligence agencies in identifying and addressing Chinese espionage and other subversive activities seeking to influence or undermine our democracies, and fully implement all EU guidelines and measures to mitigate security risks across Europe's connectivity infrastructure;
  - (ao) increase cooperation with like-minded partners on international standard setting in the relevant international bodies to ensure Europe's economic competitiveness and to prevent one-sided Chinese dominance;
  - (ap) fully implement the EU's '5G security toolbox' guidelines to mitigate security risks in networks, and propose additional security standards for Chinese suppliers of 5G; welcomes the decision of the EU institutions and institutions in several EU Member States to suspend the TikTok application on corporate devices, as well as personal devices enrolled in the institutions' mobile device services;
2. Instructs its President to forward this recommendation to the Council, the Commission and the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, and, for information, to the Government of the People's Republic of China.



## **EXPLANATORY STATEMENT**

This recommendation assesses the state of play of the EU-China relations given the changed geopolitical context since the last AFET own-initiative report on EU-China relations from 2021 and China's increasingly assertive foreign policy. It focusses on the foreign and security policy aspects of the EU's strategy towards China and makes recommendations to the HR/VP, the Council and the Commission on how to ensure that the political relationship with China is managed in accordance with the EU's interests and values.

## **ANNEX: ENTITIES OR PERSONS FROM WHOM THE RAPPORTEUR HAS RECEIVED INPUT**

The following list is drawn up under the exclusive responsibility of the rapporteur. The rapporteur has received input from the following entities or persons in the preparation of the report, until the adoption thereof in committee:

<b>Entity and/or person</b>
Taipei Representative office in the EU
Hong Kong Watch
European External Action Service (EEAS)

## INFORMATION ON ADOPTION IN COMMITTEE RESPONSIBLE

<b>Date adopted</b>	16.11.2023
<b>Result of final vote</b>	+: 42 -: 5 0: 0
<b>Members present for the final vote</b>	Alexander Alexandrov Yordanov, François Alfonsi, Maria Arena, Petras Auštrevičius, Anna Bonfrisco, Reinhard Bütikofer, Susanna Ceccardi, Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz, Anna Fotyga, Giorgos Georgiou, Raphaël Glucksmann, Andrius Kubilius, Ilhan Kyuchyuk, Antonio López-Istúriz White, Jaak Madison, Thierry Mariani, Marisa Matias, David McAllister, Vangelis Meimarakis, Sven Mikser, Francisco José Millán Mon, Alessandra Moretti, Kostas Papadakis, Tonino Picula, Isabel Santos, Mounir Satouri, Jordi Solé, Dominik Tarczyński, Hilde Vautmans, Charlie Weimers, Isabel Wiseler-Lima
<b>Substitutes present for the final vote</b>	Dacian Cioloș, Georgios Kyrtos, Gabriel Mato, Juozas Olekas, Pina Picierno, María Soraya Rodríguez Ramos, Mick Wallace, Elena Yoncheva
<b>Substitutes under Rule 209(7) present for the final vote</b>	Karolin Braunsberger-Reinhold, Charles Goerens, Eero Heinäluoma, Maria-Manuel Leitão-Marques, Dan-Ștefan Motreanu, Paul Tang, Eugen Tomac, Lucia Vuolo

## FINAL VOTE BY ROLL CALL IN COMMITTEE RESPONSIBLE

42	+
ECR	Anna Fotyga, Dominik Tarczyński, Charlie Weimers
ID	Anna Bonfrisco, Susanna Ceccardi, Jaak Madison
PPE	Alexander Alexandrov Yordanov, Karolin Braunsberger-Reinhold, Andrius Kubilius, Antonio López-Istúriz White, David McAllister, Gabriel Mato, Vangelis Meimarakis, Francisco José Millán Mon, Dan-Ștefan Motreanu, Eugen Tomac, Lucia Vuolo, Isabel Wiseler-Lima
Renew	Petras Auštrevičius, Dacian Ciolos, Charles Goerens, Georgios Kyrtos, Ilhan Kyuchyuk, María Soraya Rodríguez Ramos, Hilde Vautmans
S&D	Maria Arena, Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz, Raphaël Glucksmann, Eero Heinäluoma, Maria-Manuel Leitão-Marques, Sven Mikser, Alessandra Moretti, Juozas Olekas, Pina Picierno, Tonino Picula, Isabel Santos, Paul Tang, Elena Yoncheva
Verts/ALE	François Alfonsi, Reinhard Bütikofer, Mounir Satouri, Jordi Solé

5	-
ID	Thierry Mariani
NI	Kostas Papadakis
The Left	Giorgos Georgiou, Marisa Matias, Mick Wallace

0	0

Key to symbols:

+ : in favour

- : against

0 : abstention