Subject: The New Silk Road

The New Silk Road project, launched by Chinese President Xi Jinping in 2013, is a political priority for the Chinese government. This gargantuan project, which seeks to develop and purchase port, rail and land infrastructure in order to connect China to Europe, is part of an economic vision that raises a number of important environmental and social issues, as well as specific issues facing developing countries. Through its alliances, China is relying on maritime routes through the Indian Ocean to link up with the Mediterranean, thereby strengthening its seafaring capacity on the global geo-political stage.

The lack of a European strategic vision to address the challenges posed by the New Silk Road is deplorable. In this context, how does the Commission intend to respond to the Chinese project in order to:

1. ensure that trade arrangements with China are consistent with European environmental and social standards?

2. safeguard the independence of developing countries against the background of Chinese investment?

3. support European maritime leadership, which is inherent to a protected commercial, military and civil sovereignty?