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Answer given by Executive Vice-President Dombrovskis  
on behalf of the European Commission  
(4.5.2021)

The EU is committed to promoting human rights in all areas of its external action, including in its international trade and investment agreements. Under the EU-China Comprehensive Agreement on Investment (CAI), China has committed to effectively implement the ratified International Labour Organization (ILO) Conventions and make continued and sustained efforts to pursue ratification of ILO fundamental Conventions on forced labour (C 29 and C105)<sup>1</sup>. The negotiations were concluded in principle on the basis of China's commitment to make concrete steps towards the ratification of the ILO fundamental Conventions not yet ratified.

The EU will continue to closely monitor human rights developments in China and elsewhere, and speak out against human rights violations, publicly and in all bilateral contacts with the Chinese authorities and multilateral fora.

As with any other EU trade agreement, the Commission, prior to launching negotiations with China, carried out an impact assessment (IA) in October 2013 on the EU-China investment relations with a view to assessing, among others, the likely economic impact of CAI on the EU economy<sup>2</sup>. The 2013 IA was complemented by a Sustainability Impact Assessment in November 2017<sup>3</sup>. Both pointed to the overall positive effect of CAI on European companies and consumers.

The conclusion of the CAI negotiations came as a result of the progress that materialised in the past one year prior to the conclusion of the negotiations, following a political target that was set by both sides. The EU is committed to engaging with partner countries, including the United States, on a strategic and multi-strand approaches to China with a view to addressing the challenges linked to China's state-driven economic model.

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<sup>1</sup> C029 - Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29); C105 - Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957 (No. 105)

<sup>2</sup> See [https://ec.europa.eu/smart-regulation/impact/ia\\_carried\\_out/docs/ia\\_2013/swd\\_2013\\_0185\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/smart-regulation/impact/ia_carried_out/docs/ia_2013/swd_2013_0185_en.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> See [https://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2018/may/tradoc\\_156862.pdf](https://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2018/may/tradoc_156862.pdf)